

# THE CHRISTIAN REFORMER.

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## REFORMATORIES.\*

THE Temple of Janus is never closed. Perfect peace is unknown in this empire. Our army is not a force enlisted for an emergency: it is a standing army: it may be recruited or reduced, but it is never disbanded. When war ceases in Europe, it threatens in America; or, if there allayed, it awaits the savages in Africa, or attacks the decayed civilization of China, or the effete heroism of Persia. Asiatic perils, however, we view with almost Asiatic indifference, and, like Mahomedans, accept them as our destiny. When the war was in Europe, it seemed to come home to us; and while it lasted, all other events appeared tame. Now that it is over, we are reviving to the consciousness of a war that concerns us still more nearly. Some sanguine and sanguinary writers thought that external violence might drain off our fiercer population; that the loss of blood would tranquillize the fever which prosperity had engendered; whilst the excitement of conflict, on the other hand, would dissipate the baneful vices which make inaction so dangerously corrupt. That war, for a time at least, has ceased; and now, that its din is hushed, the whole country hearkens to the conflict

\* 1. On the Reformation of Young Offenders. A Collection of Papers, Pamphlets and Speeches, on Reformatories and the various Views held on the subject of Juvenile Crime and its Treatment. Edited by Jelinger Symons, Esq., Barrister-at-law. London and New York—Routledge and Co. 1855. 12mo. Pp. 140.

2. The Law of Reformatories; or Legislative Measures for the Establishment and Support of Public and Private Institutions for Juvenile Offenders, the Suppression of Juvenile Mendicancy, and the Enforcement of Payment from Neglectful Parents. With Information as to the Principal Institutions, the Grants from the Committee of Privy Council, and the Special Provisions under the Poor Laws, &c. By John Macgregor, Esq., M.A., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-law. London—Benning and Co. 12mo. Pp. 156. Price 5s.

3. National Reformatory Union. The Authorized Report of the First Provincial Meeting of the National Reformatory Union, held at Bristol, August 20, 21 and 22, 1856. London—Cash; Bristol—Arrowsmith. 8vo. Pp. 172. Price 2s.

4. The Philanthropist, and Prison and Reformatory Gazette: a Record of Social Amelioration and Journal of Charitable Institutions. No. 21, for February, 1857. Office—304, Strand. 4to. Pp. 40. Price 1s.

5. First Report of the Mason-Street Reformatory School for Juvenile Male Delinquents (uncertified), for the Nine Months ending December 31st, 1856. Liverpool.

6. Second Annual Report of the Red-Lodge (certified) Reformatory School for Girls. Bristol.

within, to which the attentive had never been deaf. The nearer are our foes, the more dangerous: a European war is more alarming than one at the antipodes: worst of all is civil war. Our colonies tell us that they do not choose to harbour our enemies; we must cope with them at home. Humanity forbids us to kill them; and since the blood of the criminal has proved the seed of crime, as surely as the blood of the martyr has been the seed of the church, policy accords with humanity.

It cannot, we suppose, be doubted that the lives and property of the peaceable inhabitants of this country are in far more danger from our criminal population than from any foreign invader. No army that we can enlist, no ships of war which we may man, can avert from us a peril which is already in our midst. Our enemies have not only gained an entrance into our principal cities; they are in every town: no village is free from them: the most lonely and secluded spots may provide them an ambush. In more senses than one, "every Englishman's house is his castle." Every night he examines its fastenings; and if he leave it open by day, he may suffer for his rashness. He rarely ventures to leave it, however barred, without a garrison, or at least a sentinel. Deeds of darkness are done at noon-day, and in a multitude is no safety. One sinner destroyeth much good. It is impossible to compute the mischief done by our criminal class. The losses announced to our police afford no adequate data. Fear of ridicule silences many, who feel that their folly allured the thief: want of public spirit hinders those who do not choose to add to their losses by waste of time and money in prosecution: grave doubts as to the wisdom of our laws and the beneficial effects of our punishments keep back many more. Could all thefts be chronicled, much would remain untold. The thief is a spoiler. Petty depredations may occasion immense damage. Lead purloined off a roof may produce the unnoticed decay of valuable property: the crafty substitution of worthless for sound materials may ruin noble edifices and sink costly ships. The robbery of bullion which excites universal interest, the mighty frauds by which those who are now convicts lived in princely splendour, may have done less injury than thefts which would not pay for a day's debauch. The experienced murderer has not caused such loss of life. If we can make a statistical return of the cost of our criminal courts and prisons and police, we cannot compute the time and money lost in private watching, and in implements of protection or weapons of defence,—the injury to work and detriment to health by mistrust and fear,—and, in some mournful and conspicuous cases, the madness of terror, proving more fatal than the apprehended crime. If we cannot define the amount of wrong inflicted, neither can we count the wrong-doers. The number of imprisonments will be greater than that of prisoners,



since the same persons may be convicted more than once in the course of a year,\* and in remote places where their identity is not known. On the other hand, it would be absurd to suppose that crime was confined to our prisoners. While thousands are incarcerated, myriads continue their warfare against society: no rank of life is free from them: we know not who they are. It is a mixed multitude, which no man can number. There are hosts who skirmish in crime; there are the regular trained veterans; there are the young and reckless; and those who were young in our father's time, and, being then left without the knowledge of good, are wise to do evil, and to train up the tender and uninstructed in the ways of villany. They lead unhealthy lives—but no pestilence sweeps them off; they provoke the vengeance of the law—but the exposure of their crimes, even with its punishment, seems to excite imitation. The strong arm of the law only lifts them into increased daring; and as they rally round the gallows they perpetrate crimes greater, in their sum, than the offence which is meeting its penalty. And so the battle goes on with various success,—except, indeed, that society is always losing, day after day and year after year.

We have not spoken of the greatest evil. No loss is so terrible as that of virtue; no slavery so frightful as the slavery of sin. The enemy is perpetually enslaving those who had been innocent, and among them some, perhaps, in whom we have ourselves taken an interest. Where they fail in provoking to *crime*, they may instil *vice*. What minister, what schoolmaster, what parent, can feel secure that some child whom he loves may not be a victim?

If Christianity greatly intensifies our horror at sin, it proportionally increases our power to cope with it. The spirit of him who came to seek and to save that which was lost still abides in his followers. Law may make fences, but it could never prevent them from being broken. Faith and love tell us that if we would only give, to redeem those who are the enemies of society, the care and anxiety which it now costs us to escape from them,—the money which we now, directly or indirectly, lose by them,—the energy and skill which we now engage to detect and baffle them,—we should succeed in overcoming evil by good.

When we reviewed the Prize Essays on Juvenile Delinquency (C. R. for 1854, p. 214), we expressed the fear lest, whilst our energies were directed to external dangers, we should forget the formidable army already on our shores. It is but right to say that our fears have not been realized. At no previous time has so much attention been paid to the subject. By the Youthful Offenders' Act, passed in August, 1854, any person under sixteen years of age convicted summarily before a magistrate or two justices, or on indictment before a court or judge, may be sent, at

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\* In 1853 there were nearly 100,000 convictions. Vide Authorized Report, p. 5.

the expiration of his sentence, to a certified Reformatory School, to be detained there for not less than two years or more than five years,—the previous sentence to be not less than fourteen days' imprisonment.\* The Treasury allows seven shillings a-week each (it used to be five) for the maintenance of these offenders, and the Privy Council makes grants for their education.† With this encouragement there were, about a year ago, twenty-six schools certified under 17 and 18 Vict. c. 86 (containing accommodation for 1500 children), none of which were in existence (unless the Scotch ones) at the time of the first Birmingham Conference in 1851.‡ There are, in addition, eleven schools (capable of containing 1799 children), sanctioned under 17 and 18 Vict. c. 74, for the reception of vagrant children in Scotland.§ There are also a considerable number of uncertified Reformatories.|| There is no doubt that the public mind was well affected to this movement through the interest excited by Ragged Schools; and those who could not accord as to a plan of National Education, agreed that no dread of interference with religious scruples need prevent the State from charging itself with the instruction of those who had broken its laws. One of the most pleasing features in this movement has been the zeal shewn in it by a class of men who were once rigidly opposed to all innovation: that conservatism which seeks the safety of our institutions in the reformation of offenders claims our sympathy; whilst we wish that reformers had been more prominent in justifying their name. We remember, when we heard Dr. M'Neile, Mr. Martineau and a Catholic Bishop, all advocating these schools at a public meeting in Liverpool, that it seemed too much to expect that those who were then agreed in the general principle should accord in details. There has been a great conflict of opinions among the friends of Reformatories, both as to the character of the education to be given, and the propriety of waving doctrinal differences; on the whole, liberality has triumphed. It ought to, since the most celebrated school on the continent is under the Catholic, De Metz, and the lady who is most associated with the movement in England is a Unitarian. We know, however, that religious prejudice prevented the magistrates of an adjoining county from availing themselves of her school, though their Chairman was a generous supporter of it; and the dread of sanctioning Catholicism has prevented many from uniting in the National Reformatory Union, which imposes no test of member-

\* Law of Reformatories, p. 117.

† Ibid., p. 30.

‡ Red Hill, the oldest institution of the kind in the country, does not appear in this list, and is conducted according to the provisions of a special Act. We hear, however, that it is now certified, and that its eminent Superintendent, the Rev. Sydney Turner, is appointed a Government Inspector of Reformatories. The Warwickshire Reformatory at Stretton-on-Dunsmore, in existence in 1851, has been since discontinued.

§ Law of Reformatories, pp. 13, 14.

|| Ibid., pp. 17—21.



ship. The dissidents formed the "Reformatory and Refuge Union," which requires adherence to the Scriptures. This, of course, does not exclude Unitarians;\* but a pretty long experience has taught us, that those who make any exclusions on doctrinal grounds feel uneasy in our society: where Catholics are banned, Unitarians do not expect a welcome, however open the door may apparently be for their admission. There are doubtless grave difficulties in the case of Catholics. Priests have persistently acted on the conviction that it is better that a child should be exposed to any moral risks than to the influences of a Protestant school; whilst Evangelical Protestants shrink from committing the young to the "man of sin" or the "mother of harlots"! We are glad to hear of the establishment of Catholic Reformatories; in Liverpool, especially, many young thieves belong to the Roman Church. By an Amendment of the Youthful Offenders' Act, a child sentenced to one Reformatory may, on the petition of the parent within a fortnight, be sent to another; so that priests will have every motive to provide for the reception of their young criminals in institutions of their own. Considering the number of religious houses in England, where the inmates must have a good deal of spare time, and the liberal allowance for the criminals now guaranteed, it is probable that this measure may give additional countenance and support to these houses. At this, however, we shall take no alarm, if they help to reform the pests of society.

Our notice of the works which we have named in connection with this subject must be brief. "The Law of Reformatories" is a small volume, like other law books rather expensive for its size, but well worth the attention of magistrates and others interested in the movement. Besides fifteen Acts of Parliament, it contains much condensed information, with a very full Index—a most important adjunct to works of reference.

Mr. Symons has collected, in a very cheap form, a number of excellent papers, pamphlets and speeches, on this topic. He delivered a lecture before the Society of Arts, in which he used a somewhat sterner tone than some may approve. He desired Reformatories to be Government institutions, to which children shall be sentenced as a punishment. His opinions gave rise to an interesting discussion, which is here preserved; and the papers by Mr. Recorder Hill, Rev. Sydney Turner, T. B. L. Baker, Esq., Miss Carpenter and others, treat the whole subject in various lights. We must not omit to specify the valuable Lectures on Foreign Reformatories by Mr. Hall, Recorder of Doncaster, which will interest every reader, whether previously acquainted with the subject or not.

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\* Vide letter by Rev. W. James, C. R. 1856, p. 697. Miss Carpenter, e.g., belongs to both Societies (as do many of the chief leaders in the movement).

Though some of those who attended the Birmingham Conferences which gave the impulse to this movement have declined to join the National Reformatory Union, it embraces, we believe, most of the chief workers. Lord Brougham is its President; and the list of Vice-Presidents and Committee comprises names most honoured for their social eminence and enlightened philanthropy. The chief objects of the Union are thus stated in the Report :

“*First*, to collect and diffuse information bearing on the reformation of youthful offenders.

“*Second*, to promote the further practical development of the Reformatory system.

“*Third*, to consider and promote such legislative measures as are still required for the better care and reformation of youthful offenders.

“*Fourth*, to assist in placing out, and the subsequent guardianship and protection, of young persons leaving Reformatory institutions.”\*

Much has already been effected by the Committee, and much remains to be done. The Bristol meeting was an important and encouraging one. From the eminence of Lord Stanley and others who took part in the proceedings, very full reports appeared in the London papers, and they excited a general interest through the country. The Authorized Report will be found well deserving of perusal even by those who read the newspaper accounts; and it contains in full the papers read at the sections, &c., viz., Miss Carpenter’s account of the numerous Reformatory institutions in Bristol and its neighbourhood; a paper by Lord Brougham (read by the Dean of Bristol) on the Inefficiency of simply Penal Legislation; on Punishments in Reformatory Schools, by E. B. Wheatley, Esq., M.A., one of the Chairmen of Quarter Sessions of the West Riding, and the promoter of a Reformatory near Mirfield; on the Industrial Schools of Scotland, and the Working of Dunlop’s Act, by A. Hill, Esq.; on the Connection between Juvenile Crime and the Drinking Habits of Society, by H. Cossham, Esq.; on the Akbar Hulk Reformatory; on the Relation of Reformatory Schools to the State, and the General Principles of their Management, especially in reference to Female Reformatories, by Miss Carpenter; on the Best Means of providing for the Inmates of Reformatory Schools on their Discharge, by the Rev. Sydney Turner; on Previous Imprisonment for Children sentenced to Reformatories, by Sir Stafford Northcote, Chairman of the Committee of the Devon and Exeter Reformatory Farm School; &c. &c.

Many important questions arise with regard to these Reformatories; e.g., how far are they to be places for punishment, or how far are their young inmates to be regarded as having acted “sans discernement.” Lord Brougham and others hold that the same principles apply both to adults and to children. His Lordship concludes that the reformatory treatment which is conceded

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\* Authorized Report, p. 34.



to children ought to be applied to adults. Mr. Symons, however, contends that the penal treatment used towards adults must not be neglected in the case of children. The majority, however, desire to take the case of children on its own merits, and not to embarrass the question by reference to adults. Whilst law affects great minuteness and precision, it is obvious that it cannot legislate for a vast variety of cases; it cannot determine the amount of sin, because it judges by the external act, nor is it possible to detect how far the offence was wilful. We may say that the hardened criminal, whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, is less conscious of sin than he was when he first broke the law as a child; that the neglect or unwise penalties of the law have contributed to make him the wretch that he is; that there is therefore all the more obligation on society to restore him in the spirit of love. On the other hand, a *man* is usually supposed to act from his own will, and less from the instigation of another than a *child*; and therefore, on the principle that he has command over his own earnings, he must suffer when he has earned punishment. We think that there are plain reasons why children should be exempted from the penalties visited on adults. It is so in the case of private offenders who do not come under the law. As children have not the same legal rights as adults, they ought not to be exposed to the same legalized wrongs; there is more hope that their crime was accidental, so to speak—caused by the suggestion of others; if it was the result of bad habits, those habits have not yet become a second nature, and the chances of amendment are far greater. At the same time it must be allowed that the line drawn is arbitrary. A boy who wants a few weeks of sixteen is not a mere ignorant child, nor will he start into manhood when his birthday is past; yet he will come under the operation of two different systems of law. Many young children are far better instructed as to right and wrong than many adults have been. Every child who commits a theft and hides it from the policeman, knows that he has broken the law as certainly as the forger; and as to the moral evil of breaking the law neither may be enlightened. Offences against a Government are as heinous as against an individual; yet it is no unusual thing for those of good repute to cheat the revenue; in the days of the old postal law, very excellent persons habitually and intentionally broke it.

Those who would deal with children as different from adults take these two contrary views. Some say, We have seen enough of the injuriousness of penal discipline; teach the child what is right before you punish him for what is wrong; send him immediately on conviction to a Reformatory, and there overcome evil with good. No, say others; this is the folly of “effeminate humanitarians;” \* you make crime “the antecedent of improved

\* A Collection of Papers, &c., p. 109.

comfort, sympathy and enjoyment;" send the offender, not to a cheerful school, but to a House of Correction adapted to the young. To this the reply is, that if reformation is made a penalty, those whom penalties harden will not reform. The experience of Parkhurst does not recommend juvenile prisons. A middle course has been adopted: the child is sentenced to at least a fortnight's duration in prison before he is committed to the Reformatory, and the majesty of the law is thus appeased. As a very strong repugnance exists to short imprisonments, and as an imprisonment, however short, fixes the prison brand on the child, this measure appears to many very unwise.\* It is not, however, without a practical benefit. The child learns by it that he cannot break the law with impunity; he is given time for reflection, if, which is essential, he is kept separate from the other prisoners; he does not remain there long enough to be hardened;† he goes to the Reformatory gladly, as a refuge from further confinement; his fear of being returned to the prison operates, when necessary, as a motive for good behaviour at the school; whilst he may be allowed to forget both his offence and its penalty, and to work in the school as one who has turned over a new leaf.

A large discretion is allowed to the managers of Reformatories. In some, it is possible that the discipline may be too severe; in others, the danger may be of undue indulgence, and, in the fear of producing prison helplessness, the inmates may be allowed more liberty than would be permitted in strict private boarding-schools. These cases, however, are exceptional: the discipline is usually firm though mild; whilst the numerous instances in which boys have attempted to escape, prove that a life of regular employment and labour offers no allurements to wild, untrained delinquents.

However indisposed children would usually be to relinquish their liberty, there is certainly a danger lest unprincipled parents should suffer them to offend, in the hope of being thus relieved from their support; though this motive could not operate in cases where the child actually helps to maintain them by theft. The law now places on the parent part of the responsibility of which it relieves the child:

"The mode now in use for compelling parents to pay part of the cost of maintaining their children in Reformatories, is directed by the Youthful Offenders' Amendment Act (1855). The parent or step-parent of any offender confined in a Reformatory, under the Act of 1854, if of sufficient ability, is liable to contribute to his support not more than five shillings per week. He may be summoned before any two Justices of the Peace, and proceedings taken by an officer appointed by Government, for an order for payment of a weekly sum to him on this account.

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\* Vide Authorized Report, p. 147.

† In some cases children have been sent to prison for months instead of a fortnight, and the result has been injurious.



If default is made in payment for fourteen days, a distress may be levied upon the goods of the parent or step-parent; and if no sufficient goods can be found, then the parent or step-parent may be imprisoned for ten days. The Secretary of State may at any time remit part or all of the weekly payment.”\*

Mr. Morgan, who is one of the agents for the Secretary of State, gives some important suggestions to the managers of Reformatories for the working of this Act,† which has already been enforced in many cases with excellent effect, and parents have often been induced to contribute voluntarily, in order to avoid prosecution. If a man may be indicted for a nuisance,—if in the dog-days he is fined if he allows his dog to go unmuzzled,—it stands to reason that, as long as his child is legally under his control, he should suffer for allowing him to become a pest to society. The practical benefit from this measure is described in a letter from Mr. Dunne, Chief Constable of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, read at Bristol by the Secretary of the National Reformatory Union :

“As I hold the appointment from the Secretary of State for the Home Department to proceed, under the Acts of Parliament 18 and 19 Vict. c. 87, and 17 and 18 Vict. c. 86, with the view of enforcing parental responsibility in connection with the children confined in the Reformatory establishments of the North of England, I shall be most happy to supply you with any information which I can give in connection therewith; and perhaps I may be permitted to say, that I know, from my own personal knowledge and observation, that since parental responsibility has been enforced in the district, under the directions of the Secretary of State, the number of juvenile criminals in the custody of the police has decreased one-half. I know that many of the parents who heretofore were in the habit of sending their children into the streets for the purpose of stealing, begging and plunder, have quite discontinued that practice, and several of the children so used and brought up as thieves and mendicants are now at some of the free schools of the town, others are at work, and thereby obtain an honest livelihood, and, so far as I can ascertain, they seem to be thoroughly altered, and appear likely to become good and honest members of society.”‡

We wish we had room to quote the whole of this valuable letter.

We think that Reformatories for juvenile offenders are now on their proper footing, as institutions founded and supported by private zeal and effort, largely maintained by public funds, and open to the inspection of a Government official. A school under the charge of Government would soon lose that heart and life which is necessary to influence the affections and change the wills of children; whilst it could scarcely be expected that the law should place offenders entirely out of its control. There are still ample fields for private benevolence, and we have pe-

\* Law of Reformatories, pp. 32, 33.

† Ibid., pp. 34—41.

‡ Authorized Report, p. 29.

rused with great interest the First Report of the Mason-Street Reformatory in Liverpool. This is designed for boys who desire to amend. No legal detention is exercised over them; but on each boy's admission "these two leading principles are impressed upon him: 1st. That he comes entirely of his own free will; that he promises cheerfully to obey the usual regulations of the house; and to stay willingly during the space of one year. 2nd. That he will make no attempts to leave without calm reflection, and the acquiescence of the Proprietors in his doing so." (P. 5.)

The results have been very satisfactory; and we shall rejoice if the example of G. H., Jun., and G. M. (initials not unknown in the Renshaw-Street congregation), induces other gentlemen to spend £200 or £300 a-year in a mode of investment so truly profitable and hopeful. Out of twenty-one boys who have been in the school (some only for a few weeks), six are orphans, and fourteen have become criminal by the neglect of parents. We wish that, if the hearts of these parents are closed, their pockets at least could be opened; but private Reformatories have not this power.

From the Second Report, just issued, of the Red-Lodge Reformatory School for girls at Bristol, we learn that the number of inmates, fifty, is now reached. The finances are in a satisfactory state, the average expense of each girl (including the charge for new furniture, &c.) not exceeding the present Government allowance. Of thirty-eight girls received in 1856, eighteen had no education, fourteen little, six tolerable; but all profess to have been at some school, and had evidently the means of going. Only two had no parents, and these had relatives to care for them. In all the cases the delinquency was traceable either, which was most common, to the direct criminality of the parents, or to their inability to control their children.

The Philanthropist for February contains "The Five Essays on the Management of Reformatory Schools, with respect to the important Points of Food, Rest and Labour, to which the Prizes offered by the Reformatory and Refuge Union have been awarded." As the competition was restricted to those who were practically engaged in these schools, the essays, which enter into minute details, contain the result of much valuable experience, which will be found useful and interesting not only to those who conduct these institutions, but to all who are concerned in the training of children. We see that the worthy editor thinks that enough stress has not been laid on "the absolute holiness of the Lord's-day." "We would gladly," he says, "have seen in some of the essays more upon this subject; we could wish in one instance that less had been said." We fancy he must refer to the first Prize Essay, by Miss Carpenter,\* since she speaks without

\* We are informed, p. 53, that Miss Carpenter has presented her prize of £15 to the St. James' Back Ragged School, Bristol.



horror of the Sunday enjoyments at Mettray, though she does not deem them expedient for England, and writes:

“We must then, while we specially consecrate Sunday to the religious instruction of the children, and to joining with their fellow-christians in the public worship of the Creator, make it also a season calculated to awaken pleasant thoughts and feelings, associated with healthful relaxation and innocent recreation, not out of harmony with the day.”—P. 33.

The same editorial article refers to *National* Schools and to the labours of the *clergy*, but appears to ignore Dissenters.

In all Reformatories, certified or uncertified, the success will greatly depend on the officials; and for duties so little mechanical, it cannot be expected that the supply will correspond to the demand. There is need of a great variety of teachers, and of qualities rarely united. A sound, healthful moral character is essential; yet those whose even temperament fits them for the daily routine, are not best adapted to reach the intricacies of the disordered heart; whilst, on the other hand, those who are fitted to interest the children and call forth their higher life, may be too sensitive for constant intercourse with them. Then, if there is a large staff of persons of opposite dispositions, it is very hard to ensure combined and harmonious action, especially in an occupation often so exciting and trying; and we shall not be surprised to learn that in some cases the managers have found it as hard to keep things right among the officials as among the scholars. The difficulty is less with boys on a farm-school than with children who are chiefly confined to the house, as open-air exercise has a tendency to tranquillize the feelings. Vice requires as much skilful treatment as lunacy—equal self-control and as much knowledge of the heart. We hope that, as the importance of these institutions is recognized, earnest and accomplished persons will be found to conduct them. In this work, mechanical arrangements only give subordinate aid; personal influence is supremely important. Each school should have some governor capable of commanding the respect and obedience, as well as of winning the affections, of the household. Many are competent to aid as visitors, ready to meet sudden emergencies, to deal with peculiar tempers, to supply special branches of instruction, who might be unequal to the daily wear and tear; and the uniformity of school life is advantageously varied by these visits from those who impart freshness from other scenes.

We hope that the time will come when magistrates will no longer be permitted to send children to prisons, where they become hardened in crime. We think that they exercise a wise discretion when they pardon the first offence, especially when the parents can be made to exert a beneficial influence over the child. When the circumstances of the home are adverse, or the tendencies of the child seem vicious, he should be sentenced to the Re-

formatory at once. If bad habits are neglected, they may become incurable. Whilst we think that provision ought to be made for those who have passed from childhood into that time of life when the passions are growing strongest, and which appears most liable to criminality, we doubt the expediency of sending youths of fifteen or sixteen to the same schools with those of tender years,—especially since such young criminals are old in proportion to their age, and it is not uncommon for them to state their age as less than it really is to invite leniency. It is a different thing for a boy or girl to remain in a Reformatory till seventeen years of age, sustaining the discipline of the place by the good habits learnt there,—and for another, even a little younger, to enter who is bold and matured in sin. Though we regard even imperfect Reformatories as better than prisons,—far better than licence to a child to run a course of unchecked wickedness,—it may perhaps be desirable that they should have a somewhat firmer footing and more experience before the law takes all option from committing magistrates. Yet it is disheartening to see, week after week, that the old system continues in many quarters where more humanity and wisdom might be expected.

Whilst many Unitarians have been distinguished for their efforts to reclaim the neglected and the perishing, we have not, as a body, maintained the position to which our inspiring faith invites us. No denomination professes such faith in fatherly and reformatory correction, the saving influences of love, and the virtuous capabilities of human nature. We reject as a calumny the charge that our creed is only adapted to decorous, sensible middle-class persons. Our morality is not that of the world, adopted by men without religion, or whose religion has no morality of its own. Ours is a faith that worketh by love; our motives to virtue have a sacred intensity; and when we would reclaim the sinful, we have no impracticable dogmas to distract us, but are strong in the simplicity of the gospel. It is rather from a conviction of the superiority of our doctrines than of the inferiority of our works, compared with those of others, that we say that Unitarians have not been as prominent in this reformatory movement as they should have been. There are well-known exceptions, but we wish they had been the rule. Since we are great maintainers of individuality, and discard vicarious atonement, we must not impute to our body a zeal which animates but few.

We hope that many of our readers will study this question. Some, no doubt, are already far better acquainted with it than we are ourselves; others may read with much benefit the works by which public opinion has been enlightened, including those we have prefixed to our article. There are many modes of helping the movement; the easiest is by pecuniary contributions. We should be glad to see many Unitarians enrolled in the Na-



tional Reformatory Union,\* which has been so true to the Christianity which overlooks sectarian differences when the Saviour's work is to be done. Others may prefer to give their aid to particular Reformatories. Some will afford that personal effort which is so much needed for the effective working of these schools. Magistrates should bear them in mind whenever they have young criminals brought before them. It does not matter if there is no Reformatory in the neighbourhood; indeed, it is on many accounts better that these children should be sent away from old associates. If they fear the expense of the journey, &c., they may be consoled with the thought that the county will be relieved of their maintenance.

We should rejoice to see the day when these Reformatories were not needed. Prevention is better than cure. Though honour waits on heroic enterprize, and joy is the guerdon of recovery, it is better to remove the causes of disease than to sustain hospitals; and, if possible, to eradicate crime, rather than to reclaim its victims. Those who repair the fences do a greater, though a less adventurous, service than those who climb down precipices after the lost sheep. Among the benefits rendered by the self-sacrificing friends of young criminals, we believe that perhaps the chief is the knowledge they give us of the causes of crime and the mode in which they are to be met. On this topic we have not now room even to enter; but if no abler pen undertakes the duty, we may, on some future occasion, narrate some of the lessons which we think we have learnt.

R. L. C.

P.S. Since writing the above, Sir George Grey has introduced a Bill for County Reformatories, &c., which calls for the consideration of our readers.

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#### PALSY OF THE SOUL.

COLDER, darker, deadlier growing,—  
Fancy fading, feeling gone;  
Hope, fear, grief, alike unknowing,—  
Daily hardening into stone.

Hour by hour the soul expiring;  
Hour by hour yet more alone;  
Not even the joys of heaven desiring,  
And earthly love dead—buried—gone.

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\* The subscription, of 10s. 6d. per annum, may be forwarded to the Secretary, G. W. Hastings, Esq., 3, Waterloo Place, London.

Friends and children still surrounding ;  
Rich in outward blessings given ;  
Earth, with all its joys abounding ;  
Bright above, the cloudless heaven.

But the beams that shine so gladly,  
As on icy mountains fall ;  
The soul looks forth, dark, lonely, sadly ;  
Feeling none—beholding all.

I hear my children's voices singing,—  
Once like music's liveliest tone ;  
Still their merry laugh is ringing,  
But the music all is gone.

Once I loved to watch their faces,  
Sparkling bright with childhood's glee ;  
Now I see their vacant places,  
And I gaze as vacantly.

Those dark thoughts that inly brooding  
Groan not, weep not, breathe no sigh,—  
Friend nor lover there intruding,—  
Cold, unspoken, still must lie.

The soul is dead ! not calmly sleeping  
Where wearied spirits sink to rest ;  
But still the lonely vigil keeping  
In its own dark, sepulchral breast.

Death of death ! no voice of thunder,  
Though it rolled o'er Sinai's plain,  
Rending cloud and night asunder,  
Shall call that soul to life again.

Yet ere long, like dew descending,  
Sleep this wearied eye will close ;  
Life and death in mercy blending,  
Meet in dreamless, deep repose.

Age on age, like billows rolling,  
Break on that eternal shore ;  
Like a knell their voice is tolling,  
Tolling—tolling, evermore.

O'er the slumberer waking never—  
O'er the soul's eternal sleep—  
Rolling, tolling, knolling ever,  
Mourn the dirges of the deep.



## THE PROPHET JONAH AND THE BOOK CONCERNING HIM.

THE only historical notice which remains to us respecting Jonah is found in 2 Kings xiv. 23—27. From this we learn that he lived in the reign of the second Jeroboam, king of Israel, in the latter half of the 9th century B.C.; and that he uttered prophecies which were fulfilled relating to the restoration of certain territories beyond the Jordan, from the Syrians to their former possessors, the Israelites. From the same statement, it appears that Jonah belonged to Gath-hepher, a place in that northern district of Palestine which was named after the tribe of Zebulon (Josh. xix. 10—13).

Of the existence and prophetic activity of Jonah, there can thus be no reasonable doubt; but no written prophecy of his has been preserved; unless, indeed, we admit the success of the ingenious attempt which has been made to shew that Is. xv. xvi. proceeded originally from his pen, and were only *adopted* by Isaiah, as suitable to the circumstances of the Moabites in his own day.\*

As to the tradition which places the tomb of Jonah on the mound opposite to Mosul, and named after him Nebbi Junus (Prophet Jonah), it is hardly necessary to observe that no reliance can be placed upon it. Mr. Layard remarks that it “probably originated in the spot having been once occupied by a Christian church, or convent dedicated to the prophet.”† A much more ancient tradition, of the time of Jerome, placed the tomb in Jonah’s native village of Gath-hepher, which, as Jerome tells us, still existed in his day, and was a place of no large size, a few miles from Sepphoris.

The book of Jonah, purporting, as it would seem, to be a narrative of incidents in the prophet’s life, appears at first sight designed to give us some of the information respecting him which we vainly look for in the historical books of Scripture. Here, however, it should be observed, that the writer nowhere *identifies* himself with the prophet. On the contrary, he rather carefully keeps himself distinct, speaking of Jonah always in the third person, and not suggesting by a single word, or implication, that he ever thought of being regarded as at the same time both writer and subject of the narrative. The book is evidently, therefore, a book of Jonah, only inasmuch as it is concerning him. A little consideration may serve also to correct the im-

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\* The supposition receives support (1) from the two verses which close this section of Isaiah; (2) from the repetition of so much of the passage in Jer. xlviii.; (3) from the peculiar spirit and style of the whole prophecy. Gesenius, followed by Ewald and other recent commentators, adopts the theory of the earlier existence of these chapters, without, however, going so far as to say, with Hitzig, that they proceed from Jonah—of which, indeed, no satisfactory evidence can be given.

† Nineveh and its Remains, Introd. p. xxii.

pression that the work has for its leading object, or that it professes, to give us historical information respecting the prophet's life. On reading to the close we see that it has originated in something other than the mere desire, or impulse, which such an object implies. We discern an evident didactic purpose in the author's plan; and see, in short, that the narrative has what may be termed a *moral*, distinctly brought out as the great aim of the composition. Having attained its end, the presentation of the truth which the writer wished thus to set forth, the work then terminates as abruptly as it begins; leaving the reader in entire ignorance equally of Jonah's future and of his preceding history; not caring even to say whether he returned to his own country, or whether he continued in Nineveh and died there. This indifference to the prophet's fate is clearly opposed to the supposition that the work was intended to be read simply as a contribution to the history of his life, and strongly favours the conclusion that it was written to convey, through the medium of the incidents related, the particular truth or principle which the author wished to impress upon his readers.

This conclusion as to the proper object of the composition receives support from other considerations. Instruction and prophecy, or, in general terms, the effort to convey moral impressions through the medium of parable, allegory, fable, and other forms of fiction, became common and acceptable among the later Hebrews. We have traces of the tendency to this at an early period, and in some of the Old Testament writers; as, for example, in Isaiah's parable of the vineyard; in the form of some of Hosea's prophecies; and in various passages of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; e. g., Jer. xiii. 1—11; Ezek. xxxvii. As the prophetic and poetical inspiration became weaker and gradually ceased, the recourse to such artificial forms of composition would seem to have become more frequent. Such, at least, is a rough general statement of the facts of the case; though there are doubtless some exceptions to the rule. If we compare Ezekiel and Jeremiah with Isaiah and the earlier prophets, we find the remark essentially true; while yet it must be admitted that Malachi, with greater poverty of language and of thought, has less of the tendency in question than the much earlier Hosea. We do not, however, see the full development of this tendency until we come to the apocryphal books of the Old Testament; in some of which,—as, for example, Tobit,—it has degenerated into a mere spirit of story-telling, without any very clear or definite moral purpose. The book of Jonah is the only one in the Old Testament collection in which this form of composition is consistently adhered to throughout. It is distinguished, at the same time, from later works of similar kind by the religious truth for the expression of which it was most probably composed.

What is here referred to is best seen at the close of the fourth



chapter, where the writer shews us so forcibly the thought that must have been in his mind from the commencement of the work; viz., the thought that God is a Being of impartial mercy, and that even the heathen Assyrians may share with the Israelites in the Divine love and forgiveness. With this great and leading idea of the book, it is probable that one or two kindred convictions, working in the author's mind and more or less clearly expressed, ought to be associated. The first of these is, that a man cannot withdraw himself from the Divine presence, or evade the execution of the Divine command. Jonah, in attempting to do this, fleeing to the uttermost parts of the earth, is effectually overtaken in his flight and brought back to the performance of his duty. A second thought, more closely akin to the principal idea of the book, may be, that when a man, conscious of his guilt, quietly resigns himself to his merited punishment, Jehovah will accept his penitence and save him from destruction. This is exemplified partly in the case of Jonah himself, partly in that of the Ninevites. The same merciful disposition, as well as Jehovah's superiority over the idol deities, is perhaps intended to be illustrated in the preservation of the heathen sailors. In vain do they cry to their own gods. These cannot hear them; but Jehovah can; and His might in their deliverance the heathen themselves acknowledge, by the sacrifices and vows which they offer Him. The forgiveness of the Ninevites, in the third chapter, shews perhaps clearly enough the intention of the writer to set forth the Divine forbearance; but this is most strongly brought out in the last chapter, by means of the contrast between the displeasure of Jonah at the non-fulfilment of his prediction and the persistence of Jehovah in his determination to spare the sinful city. Jonah in his anger may here be intended to represent the hard and intolerant feeling of his countrymen towards the heathen world; or, if we seek for a more special application, the writer may have in his mind the animosity of the Jews towards the Samaritans, after the return from the Babylonian captivity. So much as is implied in either of these suppositions, is not, however, *expressed*; but, if intended, is left to be inferred by the reader; and very possibly it may be to this reserve of the author, that we owe the preservation of the book and its insertion in the canon.

It is observed by Ewald,\* that the narrative might very well have stopped at the close of ch. iii., the main position, the willingness of Jehovah to spare the penitent of all nations, having been sufficiently illustrated in the three different cases of the sailors, the Ninevites, and the prophet himself. This is perhaps true; but yet, without the fourth chapter, a very important part of the writer's design would have been left but imperfectly attained.

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\* Proph. Bücher, ii. p. 558.

Not that this chapter is added, as the same author thinks, only to shew that the true ground of the Divine forbearance is in Jehovah Himself, in His love towards man; but rather that, through the opposition which springs up between the unwillingness of Jonah and the willingness of God to spare the city, the reader is brought clearly to see that the latter is *right*. This main point is illustrated with no inconsiderable power and skill. There is not, indeed, any strong, or direct, rebuke of the prophet's narrowness expressed throughout the passage. At first it is only suggested in gentle terms, "Dost thou well to be angry?" And then, when this appeal is of no avail, the more complete demonstration is given, and Jonah's sense of right is aroused by means of the trial which is inflicted on his self-love. Grieving for the loss of that which was of so little value, and only concerned his own personal comfort, he is made to feel that God also may rightly care for and pity the thousands of his creatures who would necessarily perish in the destruction of so great a city as Nineveh. Thus a righteous regard for the innocent and helpless renders forbearance towards the guilty a necessity, and it cannot be denied that to spare, and not to destroy, is what is most in harmony with the Infinite wisdom and mercy.

It seems impossible to determine what may have led the writer of this book to set forth the great truth which he illustrates, in immediate connection with the prophet Jonah. There may have been some incident in the life of the latter, preserved in the traditions of the people, which he took up and worked upon, but which is no longer elsewhere traceable. Living, as Jonah did, in a northern part of the kingdom of Israel—the part of the country exposed to the earliest inroads of the Assyrians—it is in itself very probable that, at some time in his life, he stood in some peculiar relation to that conquering people, whose power had begun to be felt long before his time, by both Israel and Syria. In this respect, Jonah's position towards the Assyrians may have had some resemblance to that of Elijah and Elisha towards the Syrians. We have no means of determining more precisely what the former was; nor, consequently, can we say why the author chose Jonah as the subject of his work, rather than any other of the older prophets—Gad, Nathan, Elijah, Elisha. That he had in his mind either the Greek story of Andromeda and Perseus, or that of Hercules and Hesione, as some writers have supposed,\* seems extremely improbable. These stories, indeed, or some modification of them, may easily have been known to the Phœnicians, and even among the Hebrews; but there is so little of resemblance between them and the contents and spirit of the book of Jonah, that there is really

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\* Rosenmüller, in *Jon. Proleg.*, vi.; Winer, *Realwb.*, art. *Jonas*.



no ground for the supposition that they can, in any way, have originated or influenced the latter. It gives little support to the opposite view that in the neighbourhood of Joppa lay certain rocks, shewn in Jerome's time as those to which Andromeda was bound when exposed to the sea monster. The fact bears simply the appearance of an accidental coincidence.

On the other hand, the defence of the historical character of the book, as attempted by some writers, on the grounds set forth by Keil, and repeated by Dr. Davidson,\* is, as acknowledged by the latter, beset with difficulties. Upon these we need not enlarge here, as they lie upon the surface of the narrative, and cannot fail to strike the intelligent reader. The conclusion of the last-named author, as to the character of the book of Jonah, does not differ greatly from that which has been stated in the foregoing remarks:—"These and other circumstances," he writes, "would incline us to believe that, though Jonah existed as a prophet, had a miraculous deliverance from danger, &c. &c., that, in short, although the book contains real history as its basis, yet that the groundwork has been embellished by a writer who lived considerably after the prophet. How far the history is parabolic, and how far real, it is now impossible to determine. We believe that Jonah was a real person and a prophet."†

The only point remaining to be noticed is the *time* at which the book of Jonah was written. Its position in the collection of the Minor Prophets indicates that the collectors placed it not later than the time of Hezekiah. This is, most probably, a good deal too early. So far as any inference can be drawn from the character of the language, it ought to be regarded as one of the later books of the Old Testament. Such, it is sufficient here to state, is the opinion of Gesenius, Ewald, De Wette and Hitzig, whose joint decision on such a point ought to be accepted as final. The last of these authors, indeed, fixes on so late a date as the time of the Maccabees, the second century B.C., and believes the work to be of Egyptian origin. There is nothing to justify this extreme view; and the judgment of Ewald, who refers the book to the fifth century B.C., has much more probability. So late as the Maccabees, the writer could not have failed to exhibit clear traces of the mixed dialect of the period. The fact is, that the language of Jonah is really very pure; in-somuch that recent authorities have not been wanting who think the book a product of the eighth century B.C., and indeed from the hand of the prophet Jonah himself!‡

The manner in which Nineveh is mentioned (i. 2; iii. 3), affords perhaps some ground for an argument. In the phrase, "Now

\* Keil, Einl., A. T., § 91; Davidson in Horne's *Introd. to Scriptures*, II. pp. 956, 957.

† Ibid., p. 959.

‡ So Keil, § 92, following Hävernick and others.

Nineveh was an exceeding great city," the *was* may be explained, it is true, by the fact that the writer takes his stand at a point of time subsequent to that of which he is writing, and naturally uses the past tense in looking back to Jonah's presence in Nineveh. Besides, it may also be urged, the Hebrew has no form of the substantive verb by which the present *is* could be more nearly expressed. Hence the author may really have meant to say, "Now Nineveh *is* a great city." The more common usage of the language, however, would, in the latter case, lead us to expect the omission of the copula.\* On the whole, it appears most probable that, in the two expressions referred to, especially in the second, the sacred writer separated himself decidedly from Nineveh, as from an object of contemplation lying far away from himself and his readers—an object not *familiar* to them, even in thought, as a great and actual reality of their own day. Hence, judging from these expressions alone, without regard to other considerations, it would probably be correct to conclude that the work was composed *after* the destruction of Nineveh; even at a time when that city had long ceased to be the capital of a powerful and aggressive empire, and when, therefore, it seemed natural to the author to remind his readers that it *had been* a place of extraordinary magnitude.

On account of Matt. xii. 39—41 (Luke xi. 29—32), Jonah has often been spoken of as a *type* of Christ. It would be truer to regard him, at least in his own actions, as a *contrast*, or *antithesis*, to Christ. The prophet's disobedience and attempted flight from the Divine presence have nothing in common with the conduct of one whose meat and drink it was to do the will of his Heavenly Father. Yet the leading thought and design of the book may well be acknowledged as, in some degree, anticipating and preparing the way for Christ's own lessons respecting Him that "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The book is thus, in truth, a sufficiently remarkable product of the age from which it descends; and with all its extraordinary features, it is as worthy of its position in the Old Testament, as any other of the smaller books in the collection.

G. V. S.

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#### "SPECULATIVE."

AN epithet in use among official persons for the condemnation of whatever proposition is too adverse to private interest not to be hated, and at the same time too manifestly true to be denied.—JEREMY BENTHAM.

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\* Gesenius, Heb. Grammatik, § 141.



## UNITARIANISM AND CHRISTIAN UNION.

*Edinburgh, February 10, 1857.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I MUST request a short space in your next number for a few remarks on Mr. Tayler's letter in the *Christian Reformer* of the present month. My principal object in these remarks will be to confirm, from Mr. Tayler's own statements, the position I took in my former communication.

I endeavoured to shew that, in order to promote the greater efficiency of Unitarian churches, no change is required in their constitution; all that is necessary being a change in the character and conduct of the persons composing them. In discussing Mr. Tayler's proposal that an acceptance of the life of Christ should be made the bond of union among us, I contended that we were already free to place the life of Christ in whatever relation of prominence we might deem proper, and that the adoption of anything beyond that freedom would be inconsistent with the essential principles of our constitution. I moreover expressed a wish to understand what more was contemplated in carrying out Mr. Tayler's views than the liberty at present existing.

This wish has not as yet been gratified; but certain concessions have been made by Mr. Tayler in his last letter, which may help to clear up the question in dispute. He says plainly, that he "abjures all written compulsory creeds of whatever kind;" that for the acceptance and realization of the bond of union he indicated he depends upon "spontaneous sympathy;" that he "regards the doctrines of the absolute oneness and fatherly character of God as all-important;" that the position he desires to be taken is in favour of practical, as distinguished from dogmatic, Christianity; that "modern Unitarianism involves every one of the essential elements of Christian truth and Christian holiness;" and that the Unitarian name presents a settled fact for whose continuance there is no help.

I think any candid person who casts his eye over these concessions must acknowledge that they amount to what I have insisted upon,—viz., that we are left to the employment of the present machinery of our churches for effecting any beneficial object we may desire; and that what needs to be done is the production of a deeper sense of religious responsibility in the use of that machinery, and not the reconstruction of the bond of union by which we may be connected together.

If Mr. Tayler had taken this view of the case at the beginning, he might, with no diminution of force, have urged every practical recommendation he has made, and that without exciting expectations which are not likely to be realized.

Mr. Tayler appears to suppose that I have intimated that the life of Christ actually occupies in our administration that position

which its importance would justify. Such, however, is not the fact. I should rejoice in any effort which might be made to fix increased attention upon this subject, so that it might be brought into greater prominence than now belongs to it. Too much attention cannot be paid to it, involving as it does the cardinal representation of Christianity. I simply asserted that to insist upon its importance was not to introduce any novelty among us, and that there was nothing to prevent any acknowledgment of that importance which might be thought desirable.

One or two of the concessions mentioned above, present points which had not been previously dwelt upon, and a more particular notice of them may therefore be useful for the enlargement of my argument.

There is, first, the introduction of "spontaneous sympathy," as the means relied upon for an acceptance and realization of the bond of union indicated.

The necessity for any change in existing arrangements is precluded by the nature of the union which is constituted in this manner. Let such sympathy be originated in its favour, and this union will, as a matter of course, be adopted, under the circumstances with which we have now to do. Those who approve of that method of action may express and act up to this sympathy without any new provisions being created for the purpose; and if "all written compulsory creeds of whatever kind" are "abjured," no place for such provisions can be found. Mr. Tayler himself states this matter in language which I should not desire to alter in order that it might more accurately define the view I entertain.

"We are further agreed, that the sympathies and convictions which bind men religiously together, must be free, living, spontaneous, not artificially set up in an outward, definite form to *attract* men, but tacitly felt and recognized between those who are *already mutually attracted*; and therefore, for the very reason that they are so felt and recognized, not requiring to be formally expressed."

A second point worthy of special observation is, that the bond of union contemplated is intended to promote the interests of practical, as distinguished from dogmatic, Christianity.

In his former letter, Mr. Tayler seemed to me to advocate the reconstruction of our churches on a doctrinal basis. He spoke of "the want of our common recognition of some definite positive belief," and represented what he was in search of, as "some central conviction which expresses the essence of Christianity." In the letter now under notice, he subordinates the doctrinal character of the bond for which he pleads to its practical applications. Thus he says,

"Good men often find it difficult to understand one another from a doctrinal point of view; for the human intellect is cast in many moulds, though the human heart and the human conscience are ever one. But



when they descend from their respective heights of speculation to the common field of Christian work, and feel whatever is best and noblest within them drawn out by common reverence and sympathy for the life in which they all believe that the Spirit of God was in a pre-eminent manner present and operative, they are conscious of a spiritual affinity which softens down their previous prejudices and suspicions." "I have ever felt that the religious acceptance of the life of Christ—as a life truly divine, recognized as such by the sure witness of our own spiritual consciousness—must be the first step in Christian belief, without which all appeals to mere reason and all arguments drawn from history and criticism would be ineffectual; and that consequently the adoption of this fact, which speaks directly to the religious feeling and experience of all human souls, rather than of any dogma which would be open to various construction from different intellects, was the fittest bond of union in the present state of Christian churches."

This strictly moral representation of the case takes it out of the range of ecclesiastical polity, and identifies it with that personal fidelity to Christian truth, for which, as independent of any change of outward arrangements, I have pleaded. A new doctrinal profession might necessitate such a change, but a "descent to the common field of Christian work," and "the adoption of a fact which speaks directly to religious feeling and experience, rather than of any dogma which would be open to various construction," requires nothing beyond the simple cultivation of those occasions of spiritual exercise which are naturally presented by the circumstances in which we are already placed. Let these occasions be duly improved, and the object thus urged upon our attention must be accomplished.

A third point deserving specific attention is the admission that "modern Unitarianism involves every one of the essential elements of Christian truth and Christian holiness."

Mr. Tayler, indeed, adds to this admission, that Unitarianism "does not altogether arrange these elements in their proper relation to each other, and that it lays the emphasis of them in the wrong place." "It begins," we are told, "with first convincing the reason, and proceeds through that to influence the heart and will." And in opposition to this method it is said, "that the inward source of our moral life must first be touched, and then the intellectual or doctrinal result be left to be developed by the individual reason in such form as may best satisfy its wants and fill its capacity." This, I conceive, is true in certain applications, but it is not true as a matter of abstract principle. There are intellectual and doctrinal results which essentially depend upon moral considerations. In order to attain to their true perception, the moral conditions bearing upon their truth must be established. This rule prevails with regard to a large portion of Christian truth; but even in the cases where it is most strictly applicable, some conviction of truth must precede the moral exercise undertaken. This Mr. Tayler confesses

when he comes to describe the experimental Christianity he advocates. "Christianity," says he, "seemed to me essentially a process of spiritual renovation, outwardly manifested in fruits of holiness and love, and only so far a dogma as the consciousness of this inward change and the carrying on of this spiritual work implied and presupposed the conception of corresponding relations toward God and Christ." The question is one of principle, not of degree, and the "only so far," is an abandonment of the principle. If "the conception of corresponding relations toward God and Christ" is "implied and presupposed" in "the consciousness of this inward change and the carrying on of this spiritual work," then, to the full extent of that conception, the "process" set forth "begins with first convincing the reason, and proceeds through that to influence the heart and will."

This leads me to remark, by the way, that Mr. Tayler does not at all remove the imputation of vagueness from his principle of the life of Christ by referring to its susceptibility of immediate reduction to a practical test. The vagueness to which I alluded related to the many different conceptions of the life of Christ which might be entertained. The reduction to a practical test will no more affect that kind of vagueness, than it would affect the vagueness to which Mr. Tayler himself referred when he asked, as to the principle of Christianity, "What Christianity? What do you understand by Christianity? In what do you make it consist?" My object was not to complain of the vagueness either in the one case or in the other, but to shew that a similar vagueness existed in both cases; and I did this with the further design of pointing out, what is indeed my interpretation of Mr. Tayler's own conclusion, that the vagueness ceases to exist only when the general principle laid down is transferred into an act of individual faith.

Let all this, however, be as it may. If Unitarianism does "involve every one of the essential elements of Christian truth and Christian holiness," which only require re-arrangement "in their proper relations to each other," there needs no new bond of union to be established among our churches for the effecting of that purpose. The false or imperfect arrangement may need to be exposed, and the better arrangement offered and pressed home upon the reason and conscience. Whatever clear statement and faithful application and earnest appeal can do in this matter ought to be done. And as it ought to be, so it may be done. The way lies open, as circumstances now stand, for every true and zealous man to exert himself in this direction of improvement. When we take into account the entire religious freedom that characterizes Unitarian churches, and remember that their Unitarianism itself was the result of that freedom, we cannot doubt that an alteration of the relations of Christian doc-



trine would naturally and immediately, throughout these churches, follow the conviction of its propriety. What has produced a change from Orthodoxy to Unitarianism, may certainly be depended upon for reforming any existing state of Unitarian administration.

Mr. Tayler, in the course of his last letter, incidentally presents two practical cases on which the validity of my objection to any reconstruction of our church polity may be tried.

The first of these cases is thus stated :

“I was brought up in the persuasion—which in my youth was, I believe, the prevalent one—that the great object of Christianity, that which gave it its special value as a revelation, was to establish the doctrine of a future life by Christ’s bodily resurrection from the grave. When, however, on quitting college, I sat down to study the New Testament for myself, I began to perceive, as I thought, that this was not the principal object of Christ’s mission, but rather to introduce and set up among men a kingdom of God.”

On this question of difference between Mr. Tayler’s present and his former idea of Christianity, I am entirely on the side of his present views. It must, however, be known to every one acquainted with the subject, that numbers of persons associated with us in church-fellowship still abide by the persuasion which he asserts to have been prevalent in his youth. Though it is his persuasion, as distinct from theirs, that he would embody in the religious acceptance of the life of Christ, surely he does not and cannot mean that he would in the slightest degree interfere with their association with himself, although they should refuse to receive his definition of the principal object of Christ’s mission in the place of their own. If not, how is his bond of union to be applied beyond the voluntary expression of convictions such as his on the part of the individuals who hold them? That method of procedure may be now followed by all who think proper to pursue it; but if anything more than this is intended—anything which would bind those who differ from this representation of Christianity, to what might be inconsistent with their conscientious maintenance of the difference—the whole platform of church-membership now existing among us must be broken up.

The other case adduced by Mr. Tayler is thus described :

“I have passed over the question of miracles, not because I ignore them, for I have never yet seen any approach to the possibility of eliminating them from the narrative of the New Testament, and leaving a particle of consistent texture behind; but because I can well conceive, that a man might have a profound religious veneration for Jesus Christ, and even truly regard him as a Teacher sent from God, and yet not have made up his mind in what manner to deal with the miraculous recorded in his history; and because I think this is just one of those speculative difficulties which should not be gratuitously thrown in the way of a man’s spiritual approach to Christ and God.”

Now I am quite willing, as matters stand, to associate myself in religious communion with persons who disbelieve the miracles of Christianity, because, from the unrestricted character of that communion, I am not responsible for their disbelief. But I should on this very ground be unwilling to give to that communion a stricter character than it at present possesses. An acceptance of the life of Christ as the bond of union involves this greater strictness, and I could not adopt it on the understanding that such acceptance was independent of a belief of the miraculous recorded in his history. The stricter bond would involve a responsibility on that subject which I must refuse to undergo. I could not thus confound my own convictions with those of another man, when, as it seems to me, we should vitally differ about that on which we professed to agree. Of the life of Christ I know nothing apart from the gospel histories, and I could not make common cause with a mode of dealing with these histories which does not, as Mr. Tayler tells us, "leave a particle of consistent texture behind." There is a wider circle that offers a common ground on which I can consistently stand with every one who chooses to call himself by the Christian name; but it would be a compromise of principle on my part to make that ground identical with my acceptance of the life of Christ. There are, doubtless, exceptions to any general rule on this head; but what has passed under my observation proves to me that, as a rule, a disbelief of the Christian miracles is connected with a denial of the importance of the life of Christ. Such disbelief naturally originates a strong disposition to limit the value of Christianity to the abstract moral truth it expresses. I am of opinion, therefore, that Mr. Tayler's concession to the anti-supernaturalist would, in its operation, be detrimental to the specific purpose he has in view; and that experience, instead of justifying his present judgment, would rather confirm the following declaration of his former letter:

"If a man can meditate the records of the New Testament—especially the Gospel of John—in a thoughtful, tender, reverential spirit; mark the transforming influence of the life there recorded on its contemporaries; reflect how the course of history and the character of civilization have experienced under its silent power a complete metamorphosis; then compare with these facts, and the principles involved in them, the present needs of the human race, and the deep wants, longings and aspirations of his own soul;—if he can do this, and not feel that Christ was something more than an ordinary man, standing in some more intimate relation to God on one side, and to mankind on the other, than any being that ever yet dwelt on earth,—we stand on such entirely different grounds of thought, that on this subject there can be no spiritual communion between us, till God shall please by some influence of His mysterious providence to fill up the mental chasm."

The conclusion to which I am brought from considering what

we are required to include in the union whose bond is an acceptance of the life of Christ, is the same as that pressed upon me by the consideration of what this bond is intended to separate us from. As, in the one case, the separation applies to those from whom we cannot withhold church communion,—so, in the other case, the union applies to those with whom we cannot share a Christian responsibility. It remains therefore, in the latter as in the former case, that the principles of our association should remain in the unrestricted condition in which they now are, and that whatever may be done to raise the life of Christ into greater importance among us, should be done by personal fidelity and diligence, exerted under arrangements which secure liberty of action to every member of our churches according to his own sense of Christian obligation. If more than this is attempted, it must result in the formation of a narrower body than the existing constitution of those churches is fitted to embrace.

It would be straying from the proper course of this letter to advance the objections I feel to Mr. Tayler's representation of the resurrection of Christ; but I cannot refrain from just marking this point, as what seems to me an unfortunate instance of the manner in which the spirit of compromise applied to the Christian miracles may display itself. When I compare this representation with the statements of Scripture on the subject, it seems to me scarcely to be drawn from them at all, but to be the result of an accommodation by which philosophy is suffered to overrule the testimony of fact.

I have, in conclusion, a word or two to say on the subject of synodical assemblies. Mr. Tayler thus states his conviction of our freedom from danger in this respect :

“With an absence of all creeds, with the congregational independence of our individual churches effectually guaranteed and unassailably fenced in by a clear and well-defined constitution, and with a predominant infusion of the lay element in all our public assemblies,—I do not see that any evil could possibly result from the free discussion of the various practical objects indicated in my last, at periodical meetings composed of deputies from our different churches scattered over the face of the country.”

This statement does not touch upon that form of evil which most excites my apprehension. I do not fear creeds or constitutions or callings, so much as men.

There are two kinds of men who rise into importance in ecclesiastical conclaves. The first are weak, but busy men—busy because weak—distinguished at once by their great activity and their want of comprehension. They are disposed to interfere on every question that can be dragged into discussion, and are especially anxious to secure such expressions of opinion as the resolutions of a public meeting may embrace. Their pertinacious meddling is a constant annoyance to men of independent thought



who desire not to be committed to anything which has not the entire assent of their judgment. The second kind of men whose influence is to be dreaded are strong and unscrupulous men—unscrupulous because strong—who, being conscious of great personal power, set themselves to subdue others to their will. They are ambitious of rule, and employ the machinery of any associations they join to raise themselves to the position of superiority they covet. Under their influence, men of independent thought sink into insignificance in proportion to their lack of qualities which conduce to successful contention. These two kinds of men are separately dangerous; but they generally act in combination, the weak becoming the mere tools of the strong.

I have no time to trace the effect of the state of things I am indicating upon the interests of our churches, but a very slight reflection may convince any one that it will result in destroying that individual action which is most to be relied upon for good, and perpetuating a constant dissatisfaction on the part of the best minds among us.

The evils to which I am pointing are inherent in the nature of such meetings as Mr. Tayler contemplates, and cannot be avoided by any arrangements relating to the composition or regulations of those meetings. I have had some experience in this matter—more than has fallen to the lot of most Unitarian ministers—and I cannot recollect an instance—when the previously defined objects of the meeting were not strictly adhered to, and the business was not limited to the means for effecting some precise purpose—which did not leave behind it a feeling of discontent and irritation arising from my being connected with measures that had not secured my hearty approval. My Unitarian, no less than my Orthodox, experience has subjected me to this trouble. There is a certain responsibility which, though he may be in an opposing minority, belongs to every member of a representative assembly as to the proceedings agreed upon by the majority. The majority stands in the place of the whole body assembled, and a man who wishes to be always true to himself cannot but suffer some mental pain when what is objectionable to him obtains, through his association with others, the sanction of his name.

I have spoken plainly of what I do not assent to in Mr. Tayler's letter; but whatever I have said I wish to be understood as having been uttered under the deepest impression of respect both for his character and intentions. It is indeed with unfeigned reluctance that I have ventured to express my dissent on a subject with regard to which I have so much sympathy with him as I have in the present case.

I am, yours faithfully,

JOHN GORDON.

## MR. TAYLER'S PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

SIR,

I HAVE read carefully all that Mr. Tayler has written in your pages on this subject, and must confess myself quite unable to derive a clear practical suggestion of any kind either from his remarks or from his explanations.

He sets out with expressing the want of "a distincter religious consciousness;" and desires to "get hold of some *positive binding principle*," "some *definite positive belief*, as a vital centre of our manifold intellectual and sentimental divergencies." But he repudiates altogether the idea of a creed or "specific dogma" of any kind; while, however, he thinks "love to God, love to Jesus and love to mankind," "too vague and thin, too purely sentimental" for "principles of union;" and he suggests at last that "the simple acceptance of Jesus Christ as the type of human religiousness, as a revelation of the spiritual worth and destiny of man, and the endeavour, through believing sympathy with it, to transform and glorify our own life by its power of self-sacrificing love," is the "true point of union for a Christian church." He dislikes the name *Unitarian*, as "an inadequate and one-sided expression of the great object of Christian union," and recommends instead *Protestant Dissenter*, "if we could only restore it to its original sense."

I do not mean to retrace the ground so well trodden by Mr. Gordon in reply to these very vague suggestions; but I ask myself, as a minister of a Unitarian, or Protestant Dissenting, or English Presbyterian society (for the name is the least matter to me, but I think the first of these three the most honestly descriptive), — I ask myself in what way my congregational friends and myself could proceed, if we desired, to put Mr. Tayler's suggestions into practice. I ask myself: What could we do, but just what we are doing, and have been doing for years past? What could Mr. Tayler himself do (were he again to undertake a congregational charge) but precisely what he did in the charge which he so long adorned? Is not our position simply that of *Christian* churches, without the dogmatic creeds which overlie biblical truth and cramp the freedom of the mind in other churches? Are we not practically and simply *Christians without orthodox addition*? Is not the practical and devotional aspect of Christianity that which engrosses our preaching? Is not the Life of Christ our Christianity? Are not his example and his spirit held up amongst us as the true spirit of human life and destiny; and this by reason of our being simply Unitarian in theology? Is it not the long-established reproach against us on the lips of Orthodoxy, that we take the gospel morality without its mysterious scheme of imputed salvation, and are satisfied to regard Jesus as a model of properly human perfec-

tion? What are we to do more or different from what we are doing, as regards our tone of preaching or our modes of worship? If I use Mr. Tayler's phrases respecting "the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the type of human religiousness," and the rest, I am conscious to myself of no other meaning or feeling but that which I have expressed above in words perhaps more customary. I cannot understand or feel what he is asking us to do, except the very things which we are always endeavouring to do, with such powers as we have. The phraseology may perhaps seem new to some persons; but I doubt whether any practical and devout Unitarian can truly say, it suggests a new, or even a renewed or freshened, thought to him.

Too much, perhaps, has been talked and written lately in the way of suggestions for the revival, organization and consolidation of our congregations. I think a great deal more has been said in the way of lament over their languishing state than is at all warranted by fact. And I have been most of all surprised to find some persons among ourselves oddly testifying their zeal for our religious principles by exaggerating every existing symptom of weakness, and anticipating (as if with satisfaction) the speedy extinction of the denomination, or its absorption in an undescribed Church of the Future. It seems to me that the Present has imperative claims upon us, and is by no means void of all reasonable encouragement. Nor can I agree with those who think that the want of a more rapid increase in our actual numbers is ascribable, even chiefly, to internal causes. I sadly and solemnly believe that the growing and avowed maxims of *lax conformity* are the chief explanation of the fact. "The world loves its own" too well to do more than love and honour us *apart*. I believe the chief *internal* causes of weakness and failure consist in the substitution of zealous talk for zealous work; and that if our friends who believe we are going fast to decay only believed differently, they would be as able to fulfil their own prophecy of good, as they now are to promote the accomplishment of their own *woes*.

As to the decline of our influence in society, it is, I am convinced, quite a mistake to imagine such a thing. Never were we more respected than now. Never was bigotry so quiet. Never was orthodoxy so courteous. The adherents of Maurice and Jowett, of Robertson, Macnaught and other Broad-Church men, can only respect our thoroughness and conscientiousness. The newer men among the Independents are not apt to call us heretics. Society, the public, the world, or whatever other name we give to men in their non-denominational relationships, has as hearty a welcome for us as for any other religionists, on every platform of political, social, educational or benevolent exertion. I cannot, in the exercise of the most scrupulous conscientiousness, *cry stinking fish*, as some loudly do.



But to return to Mr. Tayler's letters. Leaving the direct discussion of his basis of union in other hands, my more particular object at present is to comment on certain matters of biblical interpretation implied in his letter of last month. After reiterating and explaining his proposed bond of union, and avowing that modern Unitarianism involves "every one of the essential elements of Christian truth and Christian holiness," though he says "it does not altogether arrange them in their proper relations to each other, and it lays, if I may so express myself, the emphasis of them in the wrong place,"—he explains his reasons for not giving prominence, in his *basis of union*, either to the belief of *miracles* or to the belief in the *resurrection of Christ*. He says—"I have, in my search after a common binding principle, left out whatever might be fairly open to doubt or question among Christians, or might be differently conceived by different minds." (P. 94.) And he instances "the question of miracles," and "the profound belief of the apostles in Christ's resurrection and ascension," as not included in his "common principle;" not because he "ignores the miracles," for he has "never yet seen any approach to the possibility of eliminating them from the narrative of the New Testament and leaving a particle of consistent texture behind," nor "that he questions the reality of a resurrection."

Is it then possible for Christians fairly to doubt the reality of the miraculous in Christianity, and also to doubt the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, but impossible that they should have any doubt or question, or conceive differently, about "the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the type of human religiousness and as a revelation of the spiritual worth and destiny of man"? To me it appears that there is quite as much room for fair diversity of opinion or conception on the latter point as on the former two. It is a far less definite subject of thought, and admits (as seems to me) of far more vagueness of belief and unbelief than either of the others. And my perplexity is to understand how Mr. Tayler, holding the miraculous in Christianity himself, and believing the resurrection of Jesus Christ, can speak of these two very *definite positive beliefs* of his own as not involved in the common principle, while the other (on which I believe the conceptions of Christians differ far more) is regarded by him as the "binding principle and definite positive belief" which he would make the foundation of our churches.

Mr. Tayler can conceive, he says, "that a man might have a profound religious veneration for Jesus Christ, and even truly regard him as a Teacher sent from God, and yet not have made up his mind in what manner to deal with the miraculous recorded in his history." I too can conceive of this; there have been many instances; but I cannot conceive that a man's doubts on this subject could leave his impression of Jesus as "the type of human religiousness, and as a revelation of the spiritual worth

and destiny of man," unaffected. How the one principle can remain undoubted and immutable amid the variations of the other, I cannot imagine, I confess.

Then, as to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Does not Mr. Tayler's always pellucid candour here lead him to make such concessions to unbelief as are hardly consistent with the position which he himself maintains? He says: "This fact (the profound belief of the apostles in the resurrection and ascension of Christ) I have not included in my common principle; not because I question the reality of a resurrection; for the conduct of the apostles shortly after the crucifixion, their entire change of view and feeling towards their Master and his mission, is to me inexplicable (if there be any truth at all in their history) except on the supposition, that they must have had some evidence of their Lord's perpetuated existence and continual presence with them, transcending the ordinary conditions of human intercourse with the spiritual world; but because this, again, is one of those questions not unattended with difficulties—as, for instance, whether the resurrection was literally a bodily one, or rather a manifestation to the spiritual sense, though still real and objective—which every Christian must be left to settle for himself. The presentation of the fact in a particular form as indispensable to the acceptance of Christianity, might rather repel faith than render it more clear, firm and definite." Is it then a question which every Christian must be left to settle for himself, whether the resurrection of Jesus Christ "was literally a bodily one, or rather a manifestation to the spiritual sense, though still real and objective"? Can there be a doubt that the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as attested in the Scriptures, was literally a bodily one? What does the suggested alternative mean, of a manifestation to the *spiritual* sense, though still real and objective? Does the spiritual sense (whatever may be meant by that phrase) take cognizance of *objective* realities? Must not an *objective* resurrection have been cognizable to the *bodily senses of sight and touch*? What does this new phraseology of the *spiritual sense* mean? Is it not too like that of the spirit-rappers and clairvoyants, to be admitted into sober biblical theology?

Mr. Tayler states that he was himself "brought up in the persuasion—which in his youth was, he believes, the prevalent one—that the great object of Christianity, that which gave it its special value as a revelation, was to establish the doctrine of a future life by Christ's bodily resurrection from the grave." (P. 93.) And he candidly observes that men are often influenced in their opinions by the results of their personal experience. I must be permitted to doubt whether (speaking about ten or a dozen years later) such was "the prevalent persuasion." I, at least, escaped it, though of similar parentage and brought up under similar religious influences in general. But I have met with some good

Christians who have held that most strange idea that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a literal sample, specimen, and therein a pledge and proof, of human immortality. What can be more absurd? What more unscriptural? Do our deceased friends rise bodily from the dead the third day? No one believes it. Then what becomes of the sample, specimen, pledge and proof? Paul did not argue thus with the Corinthians when he appealed to Christ's resurrection. He was a clearer logician by far. He disproved their sceptical allegation that "the dead rise not," by recapitulating testimonies to the fact that Christ had risen. One positive fact disproves a universal negative. And he replied to the further sceptical doubt, "*How* are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" not by telling how and explaining with what body, but by pointing to the seed of wheat, to which God gives a body, when one who had never seen the result might have asked defiantly, How does this wheat rise up, and with what body? But are the absurd analogies which over-zealous ignorance has endeavoured to trace between Christ's miraculous resurrection and the ordinary transference of mankind from life to immortality, to make us doubt, or hold loosely, the historical fact of Christ's own miraculous restoration to bodily life on earth? If to have partaken this absurdly unphilosophical notion in youth is to weaken the perception of historical fact afterwards, sadly indeed may it be said that "men are influenced in their opinions by the results of their personal experience." The whole history of Christ's resurrection represents it as special and miraculous. To make it a "manifestation to the spiritual sense," would be (in Mr. Tayler's own word) to *ignore* the miraculous in that prominent and central fact of Christianity.

And just as the historical question of Christ's resurrection and re-appearance for forty days in the bodily form in which he had lived before his crucifixion, is quite separate, and ought always to be kept separate, from our speculations or fancies respecting the mode of our own future existence,—it also requires to be kept distinct from those questions (natural enough to the thought of the Christian philosopher, but perfectly hopeless of solution) which may arise in connection with Christ's now exalted state of existence, and his *ascension* as the means of transition to it. Has not Mr. Tayler mixed these perfectly distinct questions together, in his mode of speaking of Christ's resurrection and ascension, and of his "perpetuated existence and continual presence with his disciples"? I think he has. The question of our Lord's bodily resurrection from the tomb and his bodily presence with his disciples for forty days, is one question—a question of "objective facts," not appealing to any "spiritual sense," but to the eyes and ears and touch of men, reasonably or unreasonably hard to be convinced, like the strong-



headed but candid-hearted apostle Thomas. The question of our Lord's perpetuated existence and of his continual spiritual presence with his disciples *after* those forty days, is a perfectly distinct question; and the two should never be confounded together. Our theory respecting Paul's mode of intercourse with the glorified Saviour cannot affect our judgment of the reality of his bodily resurrection from the tomb. For forty days, the Gospels say, he was among his disciples again in bodily form, and after that time his presence with them was only a spiritual one. His ascension (quite a separate question from that of his resurrection) is indeed the *necessary link of thought* between the one condition and the other. And here—if his observations were limited to the various and vague modes of thought applicable to the ascension of Jesus—I should cordially agree with Mr. Tayler “that every Christian must be left to settle these as best he can for himself.” The ascension is not even mentioned by Matthew or by John (the two apostolical Evangelists); by Mark and by Luke it is stated in the briefest and vaguest manner; so that we cannot say the Scriptures have definitely described the mode of our Lord's transference from the mortal to the immortal state. On this question philosophical speculation seems altogether useless. The mind fails in its effort to realize the *how* of that transition from *life here* to *life there*, which must somehow and sometime have been made. The Scripture writers, who dwell perpetually upon the bodily resurrection of Christ as attested by eye-witnesses, rarely allude to that transition moment, which yet must be felt to be implied in their acceptance of the belief in his exaltation to power and glory in a spiritual and eternal state. Mr. Tayler is quite right therefore, I think, on biblical grounds, not to include in his common principle of union the specific *how* of the ascension of Jesus; but this is no reason, surely, for suggesting a doubt whether the fully-attested resurrection of Jesus “was literally a bodily one, or rather a manifestation to the spiritual sense.” May I beg your insertion below of an extract which more fully treats this point of biblical criticism?\*

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\* “Mark's account of the Ascension is in these words (xvi. 19):

“So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

“Luke's, in his Gospel, is as follows (xxiv. 50, 51):

“And he led them out as far as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven.”

“His account at the beginning of the Acts is as follows (i. 1—3 and 9—11):

“The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. \* \* \* And when he had spoken these things, while they

It is, I trust, perfectly superfluous for me to assure you, Sir, of the high respect with which I regard Mr. Tayler. Nor, after his friendly challenge to your readers to discuss his proposed bond of union, shall I offer any apology for making so free with what he has written on this subject. I beg to assure him that I too appreciate somewhat painfully the danger, alluded to by him in his last letter, "lest all deep and thorough learning should fall into decay, through the excessive tendency to popularize everything, and mere facility of talk, with superficial knowledge picked up at second-hand, should supersede the higher endowments of [true] eloquence and scholarship." Against such a tendency we look to him especially, as the head of our Theological and Biblical Institution, to preserve our young students.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

EDWARD HIGGINSON.

Wakefield, Feb. 17, 1857.

beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.'

"The omission of all record of this event by Matthew and John (the two apostle-evangelists, the eye-witnesses) is quite inexplicable. It seems as if they had regarded the resurrection of Jesus as the concluding scene of his Messianic history. At any rate, they trace it no further. But from that well-attested event, the thoughtful mind necessarily goes on to infer something that may be properly called an ascension; that is, the transference of the risen Jesus from this state of mortal existence to his immortal state. Yet all speculation as to the manner in which it may have taken place seems perfectly vain, unless we could first know the nature and locality of his present state of existence. Then we might perhaps reverently dare to ask, what became of the bodily form in which he died, and in which identically he rose and shewed himself to his disciples. The known philosophy of the solar system now, of course, puts out of question that ancient venerable faith which placed heaven locally above the clouds; so that, if we accept as literally as possible the account of St. Luke, that he was 'taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight,' we can only regard the outward miracle thus described, as having been designed to symbolize to the outward eyes of the disciples the fact of his transference to that spiritual state of being, the nature and locality of which are still wholly unrevealed. The words of what is called the *Apostles' Creed*, that 'He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father,' may have been meant literally when they were penned, but can have only a figurative or suggestive meaning now, in the minds of those who use them thoughtfully.

"The Ascension of Jesus, in point of fact, is seldom referred to in the Acts and Epistles as a specific matter of Christian belief or interest. But the case is quite different as regards his Resurrection, which is the perpetual theme of express attestation and of full-hearted allusion. Christ living on earth, teaching, healing, doing good,—Christ dying,—Christ risen,—Christ exalted to the right hand of Divine power,—are the favourite topics. But Christ in the act of ascending, is not a point which the understanding grasps or on which the affections dwell. It is but the transition period, inferred rather than appreciated by distinct thought."—*Spirit of the Bible*, Vol. II. pp. 351—353, *note*.

## MR. TAGART ON THE NAME UNITARIAN.

SIR,

WITHOUT entering into the depths of the controversy aroused by the communications of Mr. Tayler, I beg leave to submit to the attention of your readers some reasons which appear to me to make the name Unitarian far preferable as a designation for our religious body to any of the others which have been suggested as a substitute for it. It is significant of the most important and valuable truth. It marks the faith and is associated with the learning and the virtues of many of the most eminent and best among the sons of men. It has been connected in my own mind with some of the happiest and most sacred impressions of private and personal experience. Mr. Tayler speaks of enduring it, notwithstanding the slight martyrdom which its adoption and use brings with it. But why endure any martyrdom, except for a valued faith? Why take any name, except for intrinsic merit and significance—for the principles, the thoughts, the memories and hopes, which cluster round it and hang upon it? I am not inclined to say to the Unitarian, "Oh! bear some other name!" When Juliet asks,

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose,  
By any other name would smell as sweet,"—

we may answer, True, it would. But the name which by prescriptive use possesses the associations, whether of colour, sweetness, grace and beauty, like the rose, or any other which Providence has ordained that certain objects shall carry with them and communicate, cannot easily be displaced from its acquired authority, nor be usefully despoiled of its hereditary rank and force. Sensations and ideas remaining the same, a change of names has no advantage. It only breeds confusion. Hence writers and speakers, who wish to be intelligible and useful, do well to use names as custom has given them meaning, unless, when addressing an educated and philosophic audience, they desire by nicer distinctions and more exact definitions to strip them of customary ambiguity. So the geologist and chemist may take a pebble from the dust in which it lies, and, after analyzing and describing its component elements, may place it in their cabinets for the instruction of the curious.

The name Unitarian appears far more valuable than either the name Presbyterian or the name Protestant Dissenter, for the following reasons:

1. It is significant of a grand positive religious and philosophic truth, the first and most important truth of religion, natural and revealed. The other names have no such significance. The term Presbyterian has reference primarily to a theory of church government, a mode of social religious discipline. It marks the member or subordinate of a Presbytery. In this sense it is dis-



tinguished from Episcopalian. When we regard the rights of individual churches, it is distinguished from Independency, which admits of no subordination of any one church to others, or to a general assembly of elders, the delegates of many churches. As a question relating to church government, I am far more a Presbyterian than Episcopalian; for I associate Presbyterianism with the elective and representative principle, with a regard to the popular will and general interest. Episcopacy, especially as it exists in the Romish and English Churches, implies the domination of individuals who are the nominees of patrons, and the possessors and supporters of arbitrary and irresponsible power.

But questions of church government possess little interest, compared with questions of abstract scientific religious truth. What Unitarian would not prefer to worship with Episcopalians, such as we now often find them in our country, if, like the apostle Paul, "they bowed their knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,"—to worship with Calvinistic Presbyterians, who interpret the Bible by the light of the Assembly's Catechism—or, as a late orator expressed it, "of the lurid fire which consumed Servetus"? The name Presbyterian, English or Scotch, is a sectarian name founded on a comparatively minor question. Though we English Presbyterians do what we can, for social reasons, to sustain it and give it honour, it carries with it no very pleasing associations to the general mind, nor does our history on the whole supply much reason for boasting of its dignity and worth. Milton was quite right when in his own day he said, "New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large." If, more than half a century later, when a discussion arose in an assembly of so-called English Presbyterians about the relation of creeds and confessions to the Bible, "the Bible carried it by four," and about the same time open communion was established, this result was owing, not to the Presbyterianism of the day, but to the progress of public opinion,—to the toleration which enlightened Churchmen and Episcopalians had endeavoured to secure to the people,—to the new views of scriptural truth and of the genius of Christianity which had been gradually dawning on men's minds. These views and this light came not from the Presbyterians, but from such men as Biddle and Firmin and Crellius and Locke, who were wholly unconnected with that party and the sect. Through the whole course of English history, I doubt whether the Presbyterians as a body can ever be found peculiarly distinguished in successful exertion for the enlargement and security of the national liberties, or for the encouragement of free inquiry and discussion. Precisely and only in proportion as the ministers and churches became Arian and Unitarian in their religious faith, they gave a liberal and open character to their foundations; and though, in the enjoyment of the liberty and of the

principles which we have inherited, the name Presbyterian began latterly among us to acquire and carry with it something of historical interest and charm, is was not till long after Lardner and Priestley and Price had laboured and moulded opinion, that the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts was effected, and the Marriage Act and the Registration Act were carried. These brought along with them Catholic Emancipation, and are now slowly generating a variety of Ecclesiastical and University reforms.

But if the term Presbyterian possesses comparatively little charm, still less does that of Protestant Dissenter. It is powerless as an element of union, a watchword for action. It is more strictly negative, less worthily distinctive. Dissent is the unwilling and forced attitude of one who disapproves the present English Established Church,—who is driven by exclusiveness from its pale,—who, though he may wish to minister in holy things, cannot submit to its jealous restrictions, nor wear the motley which it imposes,—though he may admire much in its liturgy, cannot hear the Deity supplicated “by his agony and bloody sweat” without a shudder, nor consign to everlasting perdition all anti-Athanasians without losing his senses or his humanity. Dissent is the accident of an Englishman, to be forgotten as soon as he quits his native shore. It is significant merely of opposition to all that is narrow, tyrannous and rotten in the religious institutions of his country, and speaks chiefly of the painful struggles, past and to come, in which freedom engages against oppression, honesty against corruption, the love of truth and nature against the grasp of avarice and power, the simplicity and endurance that are of Christ against the pride and selfishness and vanity of the world. A Dissenter I may be or must be. The Protestant Dissenters of England I may honour, as I conceive them in the vanguard of liberty, the unbought, independent supporters and patrons of religion and education for their intrinsic worth. But the reasons for Dissent appear to me infinitely stronger, and the honour of Dissent immeasurably greater, when I connect it with the Unitarian name and faith, than when I consider merely the grounds on which our brethren of the Congregational and Baptist communions rest their separatism.

Indeed, were I not convinced of the superior claims of Unitarian Christianity to the acceptance of reason and the attachment of the heart, I should care little for Presbyterianism; and if Unitarian Christian worship were difficult of attainment, I should be doubtful whether to attend occasionally for comfort and edification the services of a liberal, kind-hearted Churchman who sighs over his bondage, or join myself to a church of the Congregational or Independent body, with many of whose ministers I have much that is important in common. With mere Deistical worship I feel I could never be satisfied. The voice of nature has indeed its charms. The tongue of reason is often eloquent. The flame

of imagination may flicker beautifully on the gilded but mouldering altar of dust. Fancy may wreath its garlands for the sacrifice. With the poor Indian, I may "see God in clouds and hear him in the wind." But a glory less clouded, a light warmer and fairer than the morning stars, shines in the face of Jesus the Christ,—and a voice more full of instruction and comfort and promise than that of the winds, speaks to erring and dying man in the words, "This is my beloved Son! Hear ye him!" Surely it is Christian Unitarianism, and neither Presbyterianism nor Protestant Dissent, that enforces the great commands, Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all the heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.

2. The name Unitarian is not only etymologically associated with the primary truth of religion, but historically with its rescue from corruption, and its restoration to that high place of influence which reason and revelation assign it. It is chiefly opposed to the term Trinitarian, the worshiper of three persons in one God. The Unitarian is the worshiper of the one only living and true God, the Father. Such worshipers were the early Christians and apostles. Such a worshiper, the meekest and purest, was Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, our holy exemplar and instructor in this chief and high respect. Hence the term Unitarian is not only more expressive, more usefully distinctive than either of the names proposed to be substituted for it, but it has far richer, nobler and less sectarian associations. It connects us with the great body of Christian believers who, in the age of Tertullian, resisting the encroachments of a vain philosophy, cried out, "We are for the monarchy;" and it separates us from the Platonizing mystics, who talked much about hypostases and essences, and who, under the cloud of mysticism, the cover of any absurdity and wickedness, brought in tyranny over conscience, and all the foul train of dark and corrupting superstition. It connects us with all Monotheists,—with those who on whatever grounds admit the existence of one Infinite Cause of all things,—with our elder brethren the Jews, who worship the same Jehovah, though not acknowledging the same Messiah,—with the Mohammedans, whose Koran borrows from the Bible the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and, recognizing the communications made to the Patriarchs, to Moses and to Christ, repeats the great truth in language of sublimity not to be excelled. It connects us with those interpreters of the Veds, the thoughtful speculators of the East, who have approached to just views of the unity of Nature and of Providence. It connects us with some of the ancient sages, and that greatest of them all, Aristotle, who in his treatise on the World first mastered, or at least is the first handed down to us, in writings which have remained, as distinctly conceiving and announcing, the argument from design in favour of one Great First Cause. Yet more than this, it connects us



immediately with those who in recent times have lived and thought above and before their age, toiling and suffering for truth and for mankind. Can I look into the neglected folios of the *Fratres Poloni*, and consider the deep mines of sense and learning which they contain, without ranking them foremost among the thinkers and reformers of the sixteenth century? Can I remember the admirable work of Crellius, "*De Uno Deo, Patre*," without astonishment at its superiority, and call to mind his controversy with Grotius on the Satisfaction by Christ, which drew from that master spirit of his age warm expressions of esteem and the touching acknowledgment that he must reconsider his opinions, without feeling more impressively the connection between enlightened views of Scripture and moral elevation? Can I bring before the mental eye the philosophers and poets, the critics and divines, who were Unitarians, but were not Presbyterians, nor even professedly Dissenters—Milton, Newton, Locke, Clarke, Haynes, Emlyn,—or the many who left the Church simply on Unitarian grounds—Lindsey, Wakefield, Jebb, Disney, Robinson—giving proof of their earnest faith by costly sacrifices, which we look for in vain among the non-natural-sense men of the present day;—can I think of the churches of France and Geneva, or the Unitarian churches, avowedly so called, of the United States of America, and all the holy utterances of Channing, Ware, Dewey, Gannett, Greenwood, Furness, and a long train of associates with whom agreement in the truth and value of Unitarian Christianity is the bond of union and of sympathy, who know nothing, care nothing, about our Dissent and Presbyterianism, except from happy consciousness that their path is not darkened by the shadow of a privileged and State-endowed priesthood;—can I think of all this, and spurn or slight the title Unitarian? Can I be anxious to get rid of it, and substitute another? Shall I take instead of it one which marks no great truth—which is associated, if with any principle, with only a principle of secondary moment—which, instead of marking a lasting possession of the soul, an everflowing element of reason, of devotion and of hope, refers only to some temporary accident in the conditions of earth and the bondage of man, to be forgotten as we emerge into the glorious liberty of the sons of God?

In this panting after new elements of positive belief, after a grand central principle hitherto unheard of and yet to be propounded, whose binding tendency is wholly unknown and imaginary—in the cry of dissatisfaction with existing ministrations of religion which rises from the deep heart of society, and which finds an echo in the breast even of Mr. S. Greg, saddening his otherwise impressive and agreeable letter—are there no traces of an earth-born spirit of ingratitude, discontent, impatience, self-seeking and unbelief? Is there much augury of improvement in the strength of religious principle, higher appreciation of the

authority of Scripture, or in the vitality of any faith which lifts man "above the world and the world's law"?

In my early domestic Unitarian training, the first lisps of devotion were supplied by the muse of Milton and the prose hymns of Barbauld. The elements of a candid philosophy built on facts were learned in the pages of Priestley, whose *Institutes of Religion* and papers on Education were put into my hands even when a boy. The mind easily allied itself to thoughts and principles so pure and so engaging. Early impressions were confirmed when I began to study in the originals the psalms of David, the writings of Paul, and the sublime import of the gospel of Christ. When the great duties and charities of life on which I was first taught to rest my happiness opened before and around me, the tutorship of experience was often painful, but it was made salutary by religion. Oh, let not vain efforts to penetrate the darkness which outlies the region of finite knowledge, end in quenching the only light which guides and comforts amid the gloom! Let not subtleties of words obscure the little truth which slender reason is able firmly to grasp and hold! Let not advancing years deaden the cheerful devotion and the sacred hope which have hitherto been the health and life of the soul, which have so often helped to soothe the agony of grief, check the turbulence of passion, and changed pride, folly and vanity into modesty, tenderness and sense! May Heaven itself give new energy to the truths and sentiments which have here been the sinews of reason and the life-blood of the heart! There may we worship the Universal Father, whose created marvels science may still pursue, treading with firmer step the pathways of Divine beneficence! Holier love and more constant service will still make happy "the spirits of the just made perfect," and there may we see face to face that Saviour "whom having not seen we love, and in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"!

EDWARD TAGART.

POSTSCRIPT.—Much has been said or implied among us of late about a distinction or opposition between the religion of Channing and of Priestley. I cannot see that one was less Unitarian or more Christian than the other. They may have differed on the very difficult question of the nicer and more subtle relations of thought to matter,—a question which Channing appears never to have closely or cautiously examined,—but they agreed in their estimate of the importance and light of Scripture, and in resting their Christian hope of a future life on the resurrection of Christ. It says little in favour of our comprehensiveness of mind if, because we delight in the fervent glow of piety which warms in the page of Channing, a bright and glistening stream which gladdens and fertilizes as it flows,

we can see nothing to admire in the sermons of Priestley, and particularly those "on Habitual Devotion and the Duty of not Living to Ourselves," of which Dr. Parr justly observed, "no good man can read without being better, no wise man without being wiser."

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ORIGINAL LETTER OF REV. HENRY MOORE, OF LISKEARD,  
WITH SOME PARTICULARS OF HIM.

WE have been favoured by the Rev. Benjamin Mardon, of Sidmouth, with an autograph letter of Rev. Henry Moore. Turning for information respecting him to the ordinary collections of literary biography, and finding them silent on the subject, and believing that others will share with us the pleasure of knowing something concerning a man who, though his life was passed in almost total obscurity, was pronounced by a competent judge to be a man of "genius, learning and morals," we preface the letter with a short account of the writer, chiefly in the words of Dr. John Aikin, in a Memoir prefixed to a posthumous volume of Poems.

Henry Moore was born March 30, 1732, at Plymouth, where his father, a man of extensive learning and merit, was minister to a congregation of Dissenters. His mother was the daughter of William Bellew, Esq., of Stockleigh Court, in the same county. He received his grammar education under Mr. Bedford, afterwards vicar of Charles parish, in Plymouth. The conversation and instruction of his father could not fail to contribute farther to his early improvement. In the year 1749, he was entered at the academy of Dr. Doddridge at Northampton, and he was a member of it at the time of that eminent tutor's decease. On this occasion Mr. Moore paid a tribute of respect and veneration in a poem to his memory, to the publication of which he gave his consent, but not to the many alterations which were made without his knowledge, and with which he was much displeased. The poem was dedicated to Mrs. Doddridge, and was justly admired as a production of elegant fancy and warm affection. He finished his academical course under Dr. Ashworth, and in 1755 or 1756 was elected minister to a Dissenting congregation at Dulverton, in Somersetshire. In 1757, he removed to a similar situation at Modbury, in Devonshire, where he continued till his final removal to Liskeard, in Cornwall, which took place about the year 1787. In these long periods of life he appears to have been almost totally lost from the notice of the world; recollected, perhaps, by some of his fellow-students as a youth of promise; known by a few brother ministers as a man of learning and critical talents; but probably scarcely recognized by more than two or three individuals as a man of genius capable of shining in the ranks of literature, had fortune placed him on a theatre suited to his powers. How he appeared in the latter portion of this narrow course, to an intimate friend who was able properly to estimate him, will be best shewn in that friend's own words:—"He was probably led to adopt his retired and obscure mode of life, partly from the weakness of his constitution,



the original infirmity of which was distressingly increased by his studious and sedentary habits; partly from the singular modesty and diffidence of his disposition. Notwithstanding, however, he thus voluntarily withdrew from general society, when in company with any one with whom he felt himself at ease, his conversation was most agreeable and entertaining, enlivened with sprightly sallies and seasonable anecdotes. Although there was so little in his situation that seemed calculated to produce contentment and thankfulness, and although he had long suffered under painful and complicated bodily complaints, yet he was perfectly free from any disposition to repine. I never heard him utter a querulous expression. The composure and resignation of his mind seemed always undisturbed. His manners were singularly mild and gentle. He appeared utterly unconscious of possessing any extraordinary powers; indeed, his behaviour indicated a greater degree of humility and distrust than I almost ever witnessed." The trials he underwent and the sources of his consolation are strongly marked in his poems, in perusing which we cannot but feel that, though he suffered much, he was nobly supported.

He so far overcame his diffidence as to become a considerable contributor to the two volumes of "Commentaries and Essays" published by the Society for promoting the Knowledge of the Scriptures. In these, the different papers entitled, "Critical Notes on many Passages of the Old Testament;" "Some Observations on the Song of Moses;" "On the Greek Version of Deut. xxxii. 43;" and "On the Two First Chapters of St. Matthew, and the First Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans," all marked with the initials of his name, are by his hand. These pieces obtained for their author the character of a learned man and an ingenious critic from Dr. Geddes and Mr. Michael Dodson.

Mr. Moore was the author of an anonymous letter, in which the doctrines of Mr. Madan's Thelyphthora are attacked with much humour and vivacity. At the solicitation of his nephew, an intelligent surgeon at Plymouth, he printed in 1795 a short poem entitled, "Private Life, a Moral Rhapsody." This, though a performance of much poetical and sentimental beauty, yet appearing from a country press and with no advantages of publication, seems to have attracted little notice. Its merit, however, did not pass unobserved by one of the periodical critics.

In the summer of 1802, Mr. Moore put into the hands of a friend a volume of MS. poems, which, with singular modesty, he requested him to shew to some person sufficiently conversant with productions of the kind, to judge of their fitness for the public eye. Dr. Aikin was applied to, and gave a decided opinion in their favour. He discovered a mine of poetry as rich as unexpected. That the author should have passed seventy years of life almost totally unknown, was a circumstance that excited considerable interest. It was earnestly desired that this man of genius, however late, should enjoy those rewards of merit which had so long been withheld. In the mean time, he was attacked with a severe stroke of palsy, which, though it spared his mind, incapacitated him for every exertion. Dr. Aikin kindly undertook to edit the volume of poems. A subscription was set on foot by friends desirous of supplying the comforts he needed in his helpless decline. But the progress of debility disappointed a well-meant exertion of beneficence. Mr. Moore sank tranquilly under his disease, Nov. 2, 1802, and his last hours were

cheered by the knowledge that there were persons whom he had never seen who regarded him with cordial admiration. The fund which had been raised to comfort him in the decline of age was expended in the publication of his posthumous poems, under the title of "Poems, Lyrical and Miscellaneous." With one or two exceptions, his works are still little known. His Hymns, which form the exception, now appear in some of our best collections. When we specify the opening lines of one or two of them, they will be at once remembered as amongst the purest specimens of psalmody:

"Supreme and Universal Light!  
Fountain of Reason! Judge of Right!  
Parent of Good! whose blessings flow  
On all above and all below!

And again:

"Soft are the fruitful showers that bring  
The welcome promise of the spring,  
And soft the vernal gale;  
Sweet the wild warblings of the grove,  
The voice of nature and of love  
That gladden ev'ry vale."

The letter, to which we now ask the attention of our readers, is addressed to Rev. Joseph Bretland, Exon. It appears to have been written shortly before Mr. Moore was compelled, by the advancing surges of a fanatical Methodism, to quit Modbury. He found at Liskeard an unexpected asylum. The MS. of the letter is very firm and clear. The seal, in fair preservation, represents, emblematically enough of the writer, a deer in full flight.

Modbury, Sept. 1, 1787.

Dear Sir,—Your favour by Mr. Gallop I received, and thank you for your kind information respecting Kennicott's Bible, &c.; but if I *could* obtain them, considering the distance and the hazzard of their being injured in carriage, I believe I must do as well as I can without them. I attempted twice to wait on Canon Moore, but was both times informed by the neighbours that he was at Heavy-tree.

When at Exon I gave you some little insight into the situation of things here. As it is some relief to pour one's cares into the bosom of a real friend, I will be a little more particular. My old congregation was in a manner at an end; but one subscriber now remaining, and she as far gone in M—th—d—sm as any of them. The M.'s, by joining in communion, subscription, &c., were become masters of all. They in effect forced themselves in, and I could not prevent them. In self-defence, I made some agreement with them; this I perceive will not be kept, as I have not the power of enforcing it, being single against an army. They have this man (I know not who) here from time to time, and he has acquired an entire influence over them. With respect to what I have done in restoring the house, I repent not. I was desirous that a Dissenting interest should be kept up here, and to that end the house must be restored. The present was not the interest I could have wished, but there was no other. Still

I thought the preservation of the Dissenting interest, *such* as it now is, would be of real benefit to the town, and be a check to the vice, profaness and church-bigotry, that reign here. Some good might be done to some, and I would hope it may still be so. In all this I had no regard to myself, as I was apprehensive from the beginning that there could be no lasting union between us. However, their becoming more cool and moderate than heretofore gave me some encouragement. But this man, I well perceive, will set them all on fire again. As yet we have no falling out, because many things disagreeable I have born with patience and moderation; nor do I suspect any design (at present) of turning me out, but I fear they will make things so uneasy to me as to oblige me to turn myself out, which is much the same. In short, my present situation is very distressing. I see no prospect of any other place where I could take refuge; nor, were there such, could I well undertake a new charge; for tho' my general health has of late been much bettered by exercise, &c., my particular disorder increases upon me, and must, in the natural course of things, end my existence here in no long time. This concluding period every one would wish to spend in peace, but that is not likely to be my lot. To starve is hard—and 'tis hard to be restrained in the liberty of speaking one's own sentiments, and that must be the case here. This is an ugly dilemma. Were I to quit and leave them to their ranters, the donation would, I believe, be continued to me still by the trustees, but I should lose the funds; could they too be continued, I might make a shift to live on, but that is not to be expected. But why should I go on to distress *you* with my complaints; for I know the goodness of your heart, my dear Sir, will feel for me. I will therefore say no more, but should be glad if you could give me any advice. What I have written I wish you not to communicate to any, unless it may be a few friends who may have some regard for me and in whom you can confide.

I remain, dear Sir, your much obliged and affectionate friend,

H. MOORE.

P.S. My respectful compliments to your good father.

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#### DANGER FROM SUPERSTITION.

MINDS strongly predisposed to superstition, may be compared to heavy bodies just balanced on the verge of a precipice. The slightest touch will send them over; and then, the greatest exertion that can be made may be insufficient to arrest their fall.—Archbishop WHATELY.



## ON THE MISTRANSLATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

THE circumstances under which the Authorized Version of the Scriptures was made, leave no doubt on any rational mind that it must be, in several important respects, imperfect. The elements of inaccuracy which attach to it are so many and so varied, as to preclude all reasonable hope of finding its errors either few or insignificant. A faulty text in the hands of incompetent translators must of necessity have all its imperfections exaggerated, and we expect accordingly to find in our English Bible all the errors represented which would naturally arise from both these sources.

It is not the object of these remarks to deny to the early Protestant translators of the Scriptures their just meed of praise. Their work, with all its imperfections, is a noble monument to their learning and ability. But in the execution of it there were difficulties which no mere learning or ability could surmount. The dogmatic spirit of the age in which they lived, and in which they themselves largely participated, did not allow of such a work being conducted on mere critical principles; and conscience itself raised an additional obstacle to their success as translators, when it demanded that the *analogy of faith* should be one of the laws by which they were governed; for by this rule they were impelled not unfrequently to seek their own views in the apostolic writings, rather than simply to express those of the apostles themselves. This source of error, like the textual difficulties to which I have alluded, belonged to the age rather than to the men, and is to be ascribed to these rather as an unhappy necessity than as a fault. Whatever censure is justly incurred by the present condition of the English Bible, is attributable, not so much to those great and good men by whom it was published in its present form, as to the Established Church of later times, whose dignitaries have left its errors uncorrected, though fully exposed—and its perversions unrectified, though pointed out and condemned by the most distinguished theological scholars even among themselves.

It was long ago urged as an objection to any alteration of the English Bible, "that the present translation derives an advantage from its antiquity greatly superior to any which could arise from a correction of its inaccuracies." (Knox cit. Newcome.) Its antiquity would enhance its value to the mere antiquary. To him, the consequent obscurity might be an additional charm, rather than a ground of objection. But with the religious teacher the case is just reversed. To him, clearness is the one quality which is indispensable, and in comparison with which antiquity is of no value. And it should not be forgotten that, in regard of any writings whatever, the obscurity must be proportioned to

the antiquity. The Scriptures offer no exception, for the language of the sixteenth century is not that of the nineteenth. Nowhere perhaps does the change appear so little as in the Scriptures; but even here it shews itself sufficiently to render that obscure which should be perfectly clear, and to mislead those who look to the Scriptures for correct guidance and instruction.

Examples of this class of defects are very numerous. The Psalmist is made to say (Ps. lxxix. 8), "Let thy tender mercies speedily *prevent* us," when his meaning was, "Speedily let thy tender mercies *come to our aid*;" and (Ps. lxxxviii. 13), "In the morning shall my prayer *prevent* thee," instead of "In the morning my prayer *cometh up before thee*." So also the ordinary reader requires to be informed that when Paul (2 Thess. ii. 7) is represented as saying, "He who now *letteth* will *let*, till he be taken out of the way," he really means, "There is one who now *hindereth*, till he be taken out of the way."

There is indeed in the language of the English Bible a dignity and propriety well adapted to the lofty subjects of which it treats, and which well deserves the hold which it has obtained on the respect and veneration of every class of readers. But nothing of these high qualities would be sacrificed if we corrected the grammatical errors which occur not unfrequently in it, or substituted some words which the young and the unlearned would understand, for others which are hardly less difficult than the Greek or Hebrew which they represent. No injustice would be done to the writer of the book of Exodus if *sockets* should be substituted for "*ouches*," *clasps* for "*taches*," *boss* for "*knop*," &c.; nor should we at all detract from the dignity of his language, while we should accomplish by such changes the very object which he had in view,—the clear and definite expression of the ideas which he wished to communicate. Few will have forgotten the confusion of ideas with which they first read (Acts xxi. 15), "And after three days we took up *our carriages*" (meaning our baggage), "and went up to Jerusalem." And many other words, such as *albeit*, *fet*, *hosen*, *leasing*, *sith*, *seethe*, *sod*, &c., though accurate and intelligible when they found a place in the Scriptures, should now be removed for their want of both those qualities. But such obsolete terms, though they occur frequently, including some that shock the delicacy of the reader, and others that are hardly compatible with his seriousness, do not form by any means the most important class of corrections of which the Authorized Version stands in need; and there may be some who will be disposed to adapt to our use the sneer of Simon at the labours of the great Reformer of Wittenberg, that "Luther seemed to have only in view to make the Holy Ghost speak good German." But the Protestant is bound by his fundamental principle to aim at nothing less than perfection in his translation of the Scriptures. If they contain any elements of faith or hope

or peace, they should be obscured by no ambiguity of words, nor enfeebled by any impropriety or inaccuracy of expression.

How much more urgent, however, does the call for revision become when we recollect that not only has a portion of the language of the English Bible become obsolete, but that in many cases its language never did express the meaning of the original. In some places it expresses hardly any meaning at all, as in Job xi. 6, "That he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are *double to that which is*;" which Mr. Wellbeloved justly and beautifully renders, *doubly sufficient for consolation*. So the idea of the Psalmist is almost lost (Ps. civ. 4) in our English translation, "*Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire*;" but how pure and lofty is the spirit of devotion which his words express, when, according to their just import, they are rendered, "*He maketh the winds his messengers, and flaming fire his minister*." When Cain despaired of escaping the blood avenger, and it was necessary to reassure him sufficiently for the fulfilment of his destiny on the earth, God promised that his life should be preserved; and, to inspire him with the necessary faith in this promise, gave him a sign or token, that no one that might find him should kill him, i. e. some proof of God's power to preserve him, according to his promise. But how entirely is the whole scope and tendency of this passage lost, when we read in our English Bible, that the Lord "*set a mark upon Cain*," depriving him thus of the last chance of escape from the enemy whom he feared.

When our translators wrote (Luke xxiii. 32), "*And there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death*," they certainly did not mean to impeach either the piety or the benevolence of their Master; nor did Philip, when, in connection with a passage that he quoted from Isaiah, he said of him that "*In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away*," mean to question the soundness of his mind; yet how harshly do such expressions fall upon the ear of the pious Christian. So also the spirit of the Divine government is seriously misrepresented by our translators, when they make the apostle Paul, in contradiction to his own repeated teaching, say (Eph. iv. 32), "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, *for Christ's sake*, hath forgiven you;" for the apostolic doctrine is, that God, for his mercy's sake, in the exercise of his spontaneous and unpurchased love, bestowed upon men the privileges and promises of the gospel. And in this place St. Paul has taught nothing at variance with this fundamental doctrine of the gospel; for his words, justly rendered, are, "Even as God, *in Christ*, hath forgiven you."

It thus appears that those errors and defects of translation for the removal of which we plead, touch the very loftiest subjects with which religion is connected, the deepest foundations of our



faith and hope, as Christians,—the Supreme Object of our worship himself.

The word "*Ghost*" has now lost, according to popular usage, the signification which gave it propriety, as applied in the Scriptures, and we long to find it exchanged for Spirit. *Devil* represents two Greek words of widely different signification, *διαβολος* and *δαιμων*, and when it is put for the latter, involves a serious error. *Blasphemy, heresy, mystery*, bear a meaning now, through ecclesiastical use, which did not originally belong to them, and so are converted into instruments of superstition or fanaticism. *Hell*, in its popular signification, is a most injurious perversion of the Hebrew *שְׁאוֹל*, or the Greek *ἀδης*, which signify no more than an invisible place, or a place of darkness,—the grave, or abode of the dead. Accordingly, Jacob says (Gen. xxxvii. 35), "I shall go down to *the grave* (*שְׁאוֹל*) to my son mourning;" and yet the Psalmist is represented (Ps. lv. 15), most erroneously, as saying with regard to his enemies, "Let death seize upon them, let them go down quick (alive) into *hell*," since he uses the same word which in the case of the patriarch was rightly translated *the grave*. And of what unspeakable horror has the word *damnation* been productive,—horror no less real or agonizing that it has been founded on a false theology or inflicted by a false translation. The popular idea of eternal torments which is attached to this word is wholly unknown to the Scriptures. It is passing away even from the theological philosophy in which it originated; why not also from those Scriptures in which it was at best only an unauthorized intruder? How many a faithful disciple of the Great Master has been deterred from fulfilling an important duty of his Christian profession by the fear of "eating and drinking *damnation*" (1 Cor. xi. 29); while condemnation,—the sentence pronounced or the penalty inflicted on a crime according to its nature or degree,—conveys the whole scriptural meaning of the term.

The purpose of the present article does not require, as its limits would not allow, more than an allusion to the prevailing obscurity which characterizes much of the prophetic writings, and even of the Epistles of Paul, and which might be removed by a judicious revision of these books. I will rather proceed to notice another class of passages in regard to which truth and sincerity call loudly for correction. They are chiefly those in which the Scriptures are made subservient to the support of a certain theology, by additions printed in italics, or the retention in the text of some portions which do not in reality belong to it. It is easy for a translator thus to make his author speak his own sentiments by means of even very brief additions judiciously introduced. This the authors of our English version have in some cases done, and it is essential to the integrity of the text

itself, and to the apostolical authority of those doctrines which are founded upon it, that the original writing should be freed from all such additions. Two examples will be sufficient to illustrate this remark, though many might be adduced in which the ideas of the sacred writers are rather obscured or perverted, than made either more clear or more definite by the expository italics of the translators. Luke informs us (Acts vii. 59) that the Jews "stoned Stephen, invoking and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He had just before been favoured with a vision of Jesus "standing on the right hand of God," and hence he naturally, and without any reference to any divine ubiquity as belonging to his risen Master, addressed to him his final supplication. But in our English Bible we read that Stephen was stoned, "calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," leaving the impression on the uninformed or superficial reader, that "*calling upon God*" and saying "*Lord Jesus,*" are here synonymous, and confirming the popular doctrine of the supreme deity of Christ. So also in the First Epistle of John (iii. 16), the apostle wrote, "Hereby we perceive love, because he laid down his life for us;" but in the Authorized Version we read, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And here also, by this brief addition to the original text, the same Calvinistic colouring is thrown over the words of John, which, in the former instance, we found imposed on those of Luke.

It is but little to the purpose to say that these additions to the original Scriptures are made in italics, and therefore distinguishable from the words of the original authors; or that intelligent readers or expounders of the Scriptures have seldom fallen into the error of inferring the divinity of our Lord from the former passage. However the learned may be guarded against the effects of a corruption of the sacred text which is only printed in italics, there is no such protection for the unlearned multitude, who usually receive the whole passage as the genuine language of the apostle; who attach little, if any, importance to the different character in which a few words are printed, judging that if there were any doubt about their truth or authority, they would not be in the Bible at all. And especially when such passages are read in the public services of the church, they have no means of knowing whether there are italics in the text or not, and so are misled into the reception both of words and of ideas which are alien at once to the language and to the truth of the gospel.

Why, again, does the term *atonement* occur in Rom. v. 11, when the Greek word which it represents and the verb from which it is formed are everywhere else translated *reconciliation* and *reconcile* respectively? Is it not in obedience to the rule that they should translate according to "*the analogy of faith,*"

which, to men holding the prevailing Protestant theology of the sixteenth century, would require that the doctrine of Atonement should not be wholly unrecognized by name in the Christian Scriptures? The conduct of the translators themselves leaves no doubt that *reconciliation* best represents the idea which the apostle attached to the term *καταλλαγή*. Why then should it not be restored, and the doctrine left to stand on legitimate ground, if there be any such that can sustain it?

In the first chapter of the Gospel by John, we find King James's translators departing from the practice of their predecessors in calling the Word, *he*, instead of *it*. Perhaps the inherent difficulty of this passage renders this change of little consequence. But an important objection to it lies in the fact that it is in accordance with the analogy of faith, rather than with the analogy of Scripture usage, pointing in the same direction in regard of the fidelity of the Authorized Version, as did the passages just mentioned.

But the most important of all the corrections for which we contend, with one exception, respect errors of which our translators had probably no means of being well informed. The results of modern inquiry leave no reasonable doubt that in Acts xx. 28, instead of "Feed the church *of God*, which he hath purchased with his own blood," we ought to read, "Feed the church *of the Lord*," &c. Even Athanasius himself protests against the unscriptural, imprudent, and all but impious expression, *the blood of God*; and when the interests of piety and of truth can both be served by the correction of such a passage, why should not such correction be made?

In the Epistle to the Romans (ix. 5), our English translation represents the apostle Paul as saying to his brethren of Israel, "Whose are the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, *who is over all, God blessed for ever*." But we are assured by the most competent Greek scholars, that the apostle's words in this place might be translated with at least equal accuracy, "*God, who is over all, be blessed for ever*." And when we consider that the Authorized Translation of this passage is opposed to the testimony of the early Christian church, as well as against the judgment of the most learned of the Reformers themselves, ought not the unlearned reader of the New Testament to be informed that its accuracy is at least so doubtful as to deprive it of all authority in regard to doctrine, and should he not be supplied, at least in the margin, with that translation which puts forward so many and so strong claims to accuracy?

In the First Epistle to Timothy, again (iii. 16), the popular faith receives a confirmation to which it is not at all entitled, in the well-known words, "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," &c. The ancient versions of the Scriptures, and the treatment of this text by the early Christian



Fathers, leave hardly the shadow of a doubt that the word *God* did not originally belong to this text,—that the apostle wrote, “He who was manifested in the flesh,” or “which was manifested,” referring to the word mystery going before,—and that the word *God* was introduced by stealth to serve a purpose. Here, again, we may ask, why should the true state of the sacred text be known to scholars and not to the unlearned multitude, who go habitually to the Scriptures for the highest and holiest teaching in regard both of truth and duty? Are we to have an esoteric and an exoteric doctrine—a purer faith for the teacher than for the taught—light and knowledge for the master, and error and mystery for the disciple? Or are we to sacrifice even the integrity of the Scriptures themselves for the maintenance of a creed?

But the most striking case of all is found in the famous text of the Three Heavenly Witnesses (1 John v. 7). No advocate of the Trinitarian hypothesis now ventures to quote this text in support of his doctrine. All allow that it is falsely ascribed to St. John, and that if his Epistle were printed in its integrity, this portion would be excluded from it. And yet it is not excluded. From year to year it is reprinted, not even in italics, and circulated as the genuine writing of an inspired apostle. In the meetings of the Bible Society we have the élite of the religious world assembling periodically to congratulate each other on their success in circulating the word of God among the perishing heathen, and yet no voice is raised in these pious assemblies to protest against the profane intrusion of human folly or presumption on this holy treasury of divine wisdom and grace, or to demand the expulsion of the unsanctified intruder. The word of man is thus passed off as the word of God on those who are perishing for lack of knowledge, and yet Bishops and Ministers of State protest against any interference with this monstrous deception. The Church of England has been called the fairest daughter of the Reformation; but let her beware how she allows a stain of deepening tint and growing dimensions to attach to her Protestant character. The Roman Church, strong in her acknowledged authority and her boasted tradition, may, without inconsistency or danger, look with disapprobation or contempt on the claim for a revision of the Scriptures. In that communion the voice of the Church renders the Scriptures of no account, and the Church naturally anticipates opposition to her authority from the independent study of them. When the people have no rights as against the Church, and the Church no responsibilities as regards the people, the Scriptures have no independent value, and may be maintained in a corrupt or imperfect state without any substantial loss to either party. But with a Church which was based on Scripture as opposed to ecclesiastical authority and tradition, the case is wholly different. When such a Church withholds the Scriptures from the people, as she does in proportion to the error

which she will not correct or the interpolations which she will not remove, she violates her very constitution,—shakes the original foundations of that respect in which she is held, as distinguished from the corrupt communion from which she came out,—and in the same proportion must lose her hold on the public mind, participate in the character and consequent hatred or contempt under which the Roman Church fell before the Reformation, and acknowledge, perhaps when it is too late, that having betrayed the principle which it was her special mission to assert, she must pay the penalty of her unfaithfulness. Already she seems so nearly allied to the Church of Rome, that her sons go over to the older communion only by carrying out to their natural consequences the principles which they have learnt in the new. If she would guard against the danger which threatens her from this quarter, she must respect the original principles of Protestantism, and among these she will not fail to find this one included—that the Protestant community are entitled to a faithful and intelligible translation of the Holy Scriptures.

S. H.

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#### BENEFIT OF CLERGY.

IN Dyer's time, a man being convicted of a simple felony, as stealing any chattel of the value of twelve pence,—if, when asked why he should not be sentenced to die, he prayed the benefit of clergy, the book containing the "neck verse" was put into his hand; and if he could read, he was discharged; but if he could not, he was hanged. A question arose "whether, if a man who may have his clergy granted in case of felony, prays his book, and, in fact, cannot read, and it is recorded *non legit ut clericus*, and, being respited for a time, he learns to read before he is executed, he shall have his clergy, notwithstanding the record?" The matter was referred to all the justices of assize assembled at Serjeants' Inn, and it was resolved *in favorem vitæ* that he should have his clergy; "for," said Dyer, "he should have had it allowed under the gallows by the Year-book, 34 H. 6, 49, a, b, pl. 16, if the judge passed by there, and much more here. And although he has been taught and schooled in the gaol to know letters and read, that shall help him for his life; BUT THE GAOLER SHALL BE PUNISHED FOR IT." Lord Campbell adds a whimsical proof of the "wisdom of our ancestors" as shewn by their criminal law in their treatment of women; "for as no woman could lawfully be a *clerk* (Pope Joan's case not being recognized), all women convicted of larceny were hanged, whether they could read or not."—*Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices*, I. 186.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## UNITARIANISM, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

SIR,

THE present letter shall shew brevity, even if it have not originality. The communications of Professor Tayler and Mr. Greg in this month's No. prompt me, without delay and with permission on your part, to reiterate an earnest petition that we keep clearly distinct from each other these two leading considerations: 1. Why Unitarians are in their actual state, be that what it may; 2. What should be done with them and by them, when *out* of that state.

In the state in which they ARE and have long been, I certainly think no name could be more distinctively expressive than the "well-abused" one of UNITARIAN. It marks their contest and contrast with *Trinitarian* denominations. It does more and better, so far as the facts of their congregations, as "Unitarians," are concerned, for it suggests a license of belief or unbelief in the person, office and mission of Jesus Christ, which Trinitarianism necessarily forbids. Consequently, as I am constrained by experience and study to view the case, there cannot be a fitter name for *Unitarians* than the one they have.

The necessity or propriety of another name for them arises (or will perhaps arise?) from a radical change in their constitution, according to theoretical propositions now in course of enunciation. And thus, until we know sufficiently what the new frame of body is to be, or what the new constitution in the old frame, I would urge the postponement of all question about the NAME to be taken or given. The trite quotation, "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," besides the obvious truth, implies also a previous fact, too often overlooked, viz., that there *is a rose* to name. When we have produced our rose, which I apprehend we have not yet, and it shall be in good odour, and win regard with honour due, a proper name will, just according to its form and favour, doubtless become its own, without our troubling ourselves about it,—nay, even in spite of any trouble with which it may fluster our spirits. And therefore the order of solution in this difficult question appears to me to be this: 1, to see plainly what the real state of Unitarians is; 2, to devise means for changing this state, if it really be a wrong one; 3, to lose no time and spare no pains in *practically* working out any plan which is or seems to be practicable. On the latter mode of solution for our problem I am sure that more reliance ought to be placed than on all precision of belief, radically and reverently as I hold the importance of *Christian FAITH*. While we cling to the New Testament as its record and standard,—whatever else we may think of the *miracles*, collectively or severally,—there always remain two miraculous phenomena, to gainsay which would be to make Jesus Christ gainsay himself, and to make his apostles and his chroniclers re-echo the self-contradiction. Those two miracles are, the specially direct endowment of his soul with ethical and prophetic knowledge from God Himself; and the resurrection of his life from the grave in a living visible form. Christian communion,—i. e. if it is to be *based on the Scriptures*,—must (as it appears to my inquiry) recognize at the very least those two, theorise as we may about other miracles, as essential truths. This preliminary involves no thralldom of the minds of Chris-



tians, unless the belief of Jesus himself and his disciples were "a thralldom." Over this threshold of inquiry we pass to Christian action accordingly. And without *action*, our problem will stand unsolved and insoluble; although, with even the most spirited action, it might stand equally so, unless we let our action be concerted upon a clear basis of belief. This being settled, the best way to work would be, I humbly conceive, for each congregation to "do the duty that lies nearest" to it, free from any dictation or impertinent interference on the part of any other. Zeal and results would shew themselves according to spiritual endowment and Christian efficacy of both doctrine and conduct. Expositions of Christian duty should of course embrace the subjects mooted by Mr. Greg and many others,—to be treated fervently and piously, but always with a *practical* knowledge of "what is in man."

S. C. FREEMAN.

*Highbury New Park, February 9, 1857.*

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ON ISAIAH vii. 14.

SIR,

YOUR correspondent, A late Bengal Civilian (C. R., Dec. 1856), says, as I before noticed, that he once agreed with Dr. P. Smith in supposing the virgin, or young maiden, referred to, Isaiah vii. 14, to be the Queen of Ahaz. He adds that he therefore stated, in a work which he names, the birth of Hezekiah to have occurred within a twelvemonth of the delivery of that prophecy. This is, I think, the opinion of many commentators on the subject. But he tells us that, from a comparison of 2 Kings xvi. 2 with xviii. 12, it is evident Hezekiah must have been at least eight or nine years of age at that time, and consequently admits that he must have been mistaken in his statement. This of course refers either to his statement about "the virgin" being the Queen of Ahaz, or to that about the age of Hezekiah at the time of the utterance of the prophecy. Inferring from this that the supposed age of Hezekiah at that time was his reason for questioning the correctness of Dr. P. Smith's and his own former conclusion, I endeavoured, by pointing out the necessarily immature age of Ahaz at the time of his son's birth, if he were really twenty-five years old when he began to reign, to shew that the statements in the chapters referred to were not sufficient to substantiate that objection. It seemed to me that if, according to what has been deemed by others a reasonable conjecture, and one which is supported by the acknowledged age of Ahaz, a mistake of ten years had been made respecting the age of Hezekiah, the ground of your correspondent's objection would be removed; and as my only objects were to name and to support that conjecture, which was not alluded to and did not seem to have been taken into the account in the communication, I thought that, without the idea of throwing "any light on the obscurity in which the prophecy is veiled," I had not altogether failed in my endeavour.

Your correspondent makes no attempt to disprove the correctness of the conjecture, if we except his reference to statements before alluded to in a chronology which is not to be implicitly depended upon in this case, because it is in other instances manifestly and widely incorrect. I should have felt glad if he had done so, if he have any arguments to

advance against it, because I feel sure they would have been clearly and fairly expressed.

I must own that the considerations upon which stress is laid, in opposition to those which I urged in my letter of Jan. 9th, in support of my opinion that by the child promised and the son announced we are to understand the same individual, do not seem to me to have much weight. I still think the language foretelling the child supports the idea that he was to be a member of the same royal family to which the son given is allowed to have belonged. I am strengthened in this opinion by the fact that the sign was given, not to the prophet, but to the king; to whose son, if successful as a prince and a soldier in after days, the descriptive title Immanuel might well be given; in whose house the son who was afterwards to be honoured with the titles foretold when his arrival was announced, began that life which, if his birth occurred in evident fulfilment of the prediction, would properly be regarded as a sign that the other interesting portions of the prophecy would be accomplished. I am, I think, still further supported by the fact, that in Isaiah viii. 8, a prediction uttered subsequently to vii. 14, Immanuel is again named, and spoken of as the possessor of the land which was to be overspread by the King of Assyria.

I do not see that the words, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs," &c., Is. viii. 18, are any proof that the prophet, and not the king, was to be the father of the promised child; for in whatever way those words might be applicable to them, it was not only Maher-shalal-hashbaz who is the subject of the separate prophecy recorded in the four first verses of the eighth chapter, but both or all the prophet's children who were so spoken of, one of whom, if not all of them, must therefore have been referred to otherwise than as connected with the fulfilment of the prediction before us.

I am not aware of having confused the sign intended to prove the fulfilment of the prophecy, with the subject of the prophecy itself. They are sufficiently distinct to make the difference easily perceptible, and I am unable to discover the grounds on which I am supposed to do so. In the prediction I find a foreseen description of a sign promised which I think is applicable only to a child belonging to the royal family—to that of him to whom the sign was to be given; and in the announcement I hear a joyful declaration that the important sign had at length appeared, and that in it sufficient reasons were supplied for believing, in the full assurance of faith, that the prediction itself would soon be fulfilled—that the kingdom would be delivered from its threatening and terrible foes while the child born, the son given, was yet in his early youth. What confusion of a deliverance foretold with either the promise or the giving of the sign of the accomplishment of that prediction can there be in this? I am not able to discover anything of the kind, any more than I am able to discover proof that the sign was not given when the child was born to the house of Ahaz, who, when he became a king whose armies were victorious, whose reign was prosperous, and whose kingdom was happy, was to be called, in the poetic language of his country, "Immanuel," that is, "God with us," and other names to which that was equivalent.

J. N.

[This discussion has proceeded far enough, and must now stop. ED. C. R.]

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

*Enchiridion; containing Institutions, Divine, Contemplative, Practical, Moral, Ethical, Aëconomical, Political.* Written by Francis Quarles. Feap. 8vo. Pp. 174. London—John Russell Smith. 1856.

*Lives of the English Sacred Poets.* By Robert Aris Willmott. First Series. London—Parker.

THE popularity of Francis Quarles has undergone some vicissitudes, but seems now settling upon a firm basis. Antony Wood,—always surly and churlish when a Puritan comes before him,—speaks of him as the “sometime darling of plebeian judgments.” Thomas Fuller, on the contrary, thought him so excellent a poet, that had he been contemporary with Plato, the philosopher would have not only admitted the poet within his republic, but would have advanced him to office. Pope pronounced him, though an honest man, a dull writer, and intimated that the graver’s art had alone saved him from oblivion.

“———— The pictures for the page atone,  
And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own.”

The same poem, unfortunately for Pope, thus mentions the inimitable author of Robinson Crusoe :

“Earless on high, stood unabashed Defoe,”—

a line which contains a ridiculous blunder as to a matter of fact, and a not less ridiculous blunder in a matter of opinion, in putting Defoe into the same class as Redpath, Roper and Curl. Thomas Campbell, in speaking of Quarles, calls him a “voluminous saint,” and while apologizing for Pope’s injustice, admits that he had merits as a poet, and that he wrote vigorous prose. It is somewhat remarkable that one of the specimens given by Mr. Campbell from the works of a man at whom he sneers on account of the precision of his manners and the number of his books, is a humorous song in ridicule of the levellers who would put down learning and refinement, as well as the distinctions of rank.

“We’ll down with all the ’Varsities  
Where learning is profest,  
Because they practise and maintain  
The language of the Beast.  
We’ll drive the doctors out of doors,  
And arts, whate’er they be;  
We’ll cry both arts and learning down,  
And hey then up go we!”

Mr. Robert Aris Willmott, in his excellent *Lives of the Sacred Poets*, has not only come to the rescue of Quarles’s fame, but has given us the best account with which we are acquainted of his life. He declares his conviction that, spite of detraction, Quarles will live. “His manly vigour, his uncompromising independence, his disinterested patriotism and his exalted piety, cannot be entirely forgotten. There are flowers whose blossoms no neglect can wither.”

Although far less is known respecting Francis Quarles than a rational curiosity would desire to know, still the recorded events of his life increase the interest which his works deservedly inspire. He was in 1592 born at Romford, in the county of Essex. His father served



Queen Elizabeth in several public offices, the highest of which was Purveyor of the Navy. After outstripping his schoolfellows, the younger Quarles entered the University of Cambridge when sixteen years of age. From the University he proceeded to Lincoln's Inn, entering on the study of law not so much for the sake of reaching a gainful profession, as to serve his neighbours and friends by allaying animosities and bringing his knowledge of equity to bear on practical peace-making amongst neighbours who had fallen out. Though without the ambition of a courtier, he did not refuse preferment when it came to him in the shape of duty. On the marriage of the beautiful Princess Elizabeth, in 1613, to Frederick Count Palatine of the Rhine, he accepted the office of Cupbearer to the youthful Princess. Her subsequent misfortunes as the Queen of Bohemia form a painful episode in English history. How long he remained in Germany we know not; but it is conjectured that he was forced to quit the Bohemian court by the irretrievable ruin of the Elector's fortunes. There was a tradition that Charles the First pensioned Quarles, and the tradition is preserved in the lines of Pope:

"The Hero William, and the Martyr Charles,  
One knighted Blackmore, and one pensioned Quarles."

The poet sneers at royal taste. If Charles had pensioned our poet, it would not have condemned his taste; but there are reasons for questioning the statement altogether. In an edition (*surreptitious*, it must be admitted) of one of his poems, Royston, the publisher, dedicates the volume to the King, and states that the abilities of the poet were (till death darkened that great light in his soul) *sacrificed* to the King. It is well argued by a contributor to *Notes and Queries* (Vol. II. p. 171), that if Charles had really conferred a pension on the poet, the publisher would have recalled the circumstance. It is probable that the rhyme, bad as it is, which the name of the poet gives to *Charles*, tempted Pope to use a story for which no adequate authority exists.

In March, 1621, Quarles was in Ireland, where he found honourable and congenial employment in the palace of the learned and amiable Usher, a prelate whose mild virtues almost won over some of the Presbyterian leaders to think of a submission to Episcopacy, and who kindly visited John Biddle at Gloucester to try and recover that learned heretic to the "orthodox" faith. Quarles discharged for some time the duties of secretary to Usher. We have not found any notice of the fact in Dr. Elrington's *Life of Usher*. It is to some extent a confirmation of the supposed Puritan tendency of the Irish Primate, against the impression of which this biographer of the Archbishop as resolutely as unsuccessfully struggles. There are some pleasing proofs that the bond of union between Usher and his sometime secretary was of a closer nature than that relation generally produces. In dedicating a portion of the *Enchiridion* to Elizabeth Usher, the Archbishop's daughter, Quarles speaks of the service which he owed and the affection which he bore to her parents. The Archbishop, in one of his Latin letters to Vossius, records some special literary help that Quarles had given him, and speaks of him as a man possessing celebrity in England through his sacred poems. To the family of the poet the Prelate was a friend. John, the eldest son, owed to him his education, and was a resident in the Archbishop's house. It has been till lately supposed that the break-

ing out of troubles in Ireland drove Quarles from his employment, and compelled him to seek refuge in England. But Mr. Willmott has shewn by a civic document of the corporation of London, bearing date Feb. 4, 1639 (two years before the Irish rebellion), that Quarles received, through the influence of the Earl of Dorset (Edward, the fourth Earl, noted by his fatal duel under the walls of Antwerp with the Lord Bruce), the post of City Chronologer, with a salary of 100 nobles per annum. This post he continued to hold through the remainder of his life.

When the national troubles broke out, Quarles, too gentle to be a strong partizan, sided with the Royal party. It was his anxious desire to do what he could to quench the fire of dissension eating into the very heart of his country. With this view he put out a few "Thoughts upon Peace and War," which Mr. Willmott praises for their mild wisdom and Christian patriotism.

The publication of his opinions, and still more a visit he paid to Oxford, where the King's court was, exposed him to the hostility of the Parliamentary party. The humble home of the poet was attacked, and books and precious papers were destroyed. His enemies next attacked his character. Eight men joined in a petition against him, in which, it is said, he was defamed with equal injustice and cruelty. As soon as he heard of this proceeding, he foretold but too truly that it would be his death. He died, aged 52 years, September 8, 1644, and was buried in the church of St. Leonard's in Foster Lane. A beautiful tribute to his memory was afterwards published by Ursula, his widow. Never did conjugal sorrow draw a more lovely portrait:

"He was the husband of one wife, by whom he was the father of eighteen children; and how faithful and loving a husband and father he was, the joint tears of his widow and fatherless children will better express than my pen is able to do. In all his duties to God and man he was conscionable and orderly. He preferred God and religion to the first place in his thoughts, his king and country to the second, his family and studies he removed to the last. As for God he was frequent in his devotions and prayers to him, and almost constant in reading or meditating on his holy word. \* \* \* And for his family his care was very great over that, even when his occasions caused his absence from it. And when he was at home, his exhortations to us to continue in virtue and godly life, were so pious and frequent, his admonitions so grave and piercing, his reprehensions so mild and gentle, and (above all) his own example in every religious and moral duty so constant and manifest, that his equal may be desired, but can hardly be met withal."

He was in his personal habits abstemious. His dislike of the tavern gaieties of the wits of his day was in part, it is conjectured, the occasion of Ben Jonson's antipathy to him. His indefatigable habits of study may be gathered from the fact that he generally entered his library before four o'clock in the morning. His intellectual powers and moral qualities were appreciated by others than his family. Marriot, the bookseller, enthusiastically commended his conversation as "distilling pleasure, knowledge and virtue to all his acquaintance."

Of the poems of Quarles we do not propose to say much. The earliest production of his muse was "The Feast of Worms, or the History of Jonah." It is characterized by a strange intermixture of beauties and blemishes, by an alternation of weak conceits and passages full of simple power. Like most of the poems of that age, it is not uninterruptedly pure in its thoughts; too often the poet allows his strength to degenerate

into coarseness. This fault is still more apparent in his "History of Argalus and Parthenia," of which Thomas Campbell censures the positive indecency. With all its faults, the poem met with a favourable reception from the public, and his son John published, in 1659, a continuation of it.

No species of poetry is more difficult, certainly there is none of which the reader more quickly wearies when ill executed, than the Elegy. Over all the difficulties of this kind of composition Quarles entirely triumphed in his "Alphabet of Elegies," in which he mourns the death, in 1625, of his friend Dr. Aylmer (stricken with the plague), the son of the Bishop of that name, tutor to Lady Jane Grey. This poem is not unworthy of a place in a volume of elegiac poetry containing Milton's "Lycidas" and Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

Of the "Emblems," with which the name of Quarles is chiefly associated, Campbell has spoken with rash contempt, as "whimsical" and lacking the merit of originality. That the idea was taken from the *Pia Desideria* of Herman Hugo is true; here and there lines, and even entire passages, are translated; but in general (we make the statement entirely on Mr. Willmott's authority) the resemblance is confined to a free paraphrase. Southey styled the Emblems "fine poems," while he ridiculed the prints with which they were disfigured rather than illustrated. Many readers are deluded to accept a modern Methodistical and berhymed version of Quarles as his genuine Emblems. Let the following passage, expressive of the utterances of one longing for release by death from sorrow, shew how tunefully and in what beautifully simple English Quarles could sometimes sing:

"How often, tired with the fastidious light,  
Have my faint lips implored the shades of night!  
How often have my mighty torments pray'd  
For lingering twilight, glutted with the shade!  
Day worse than night, night worse than day appears;  
In fears I spend my nights, my days in tears:  
I moan unpitied, groan without relief;  
There is nor end, nor measure of my grief.  
The smiling flower salutes the day; it grows  
Untouch'd with care; it neither spins nor sows.  
O that my tedious life were like this flower,  
Or freed from grief, or finish'd with an hour!  
Why was I born? Why was I born a man?  
And why proportion'd by so large a span?  
Or why suspended by the common lot,  
And being born to die, why die I not?"

The *Enchiridion*, a collection of Maxims and brief Essays, was originally published in 1641. It was the first fruit of the learned leisure which his city office gave him. It was reprinted several times during the 17th century, but had become a somewhat scarce book, until Mr. Russell Smith recently reproduced it in a very neat edition,—one of a series of reprints, in being or promised, under the general title of "Library of Old Authors."

Beautiful as the style of these Maxims is, we value them far more for their essential wisdom. Of those relating to practical religion we had marked for extract many admirable things, which our limited space compels us reluctantly to omit.



## INTELLIGENCE.

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, LONDON.

In our last No. we gave a bare statement of the resolutions and amendment at the annual meeting of Trustees, on which a long and anxious discussion was based. We purposely abstained from giving even an outline of the speeches delivered and the arguments used by the Trustees who took part in the discussion, because up to the time of going to press we were not without hope that the divided counsels which the discussion elicited might be united by some conciliatory course to be devised by the Committee. Individually, we interpreted the vote of the Trustees assembled in Cross-Street chapel on 20th of January, that both the resolution of Mr. Mark Philips and the amendment of Rev. Edward Higginson should be withdrawn, into an expression of desire that division amongst the friends of the College should be avoided, and that the Committee should be left entirely unfettered by special instructions, that they might be the better able to secure continued harmony amongst the supporters of the College. We have since learnt that others put a different interpretation on the proceedings and wishes of the Trustees, and regarded (we know not on what grounds) the scheme of "re-distribution" as virtually carried. Before our Magazine was in the hands of our readers, the new College Committee met. It will be conceded by all candid men that their position was embarrassing, and the duty entrusted to them by the Trustees exceedingly difficult. By no conceivable course of action could they have pleased all parties. If their policy disappoints any considerable section of our readers, we trust the difficulty of their position will be remembered in mitigation of possible censure. As to what has actually taken place in the College Committee, we are not allowed by that body to present to the public a full report of their votes. As soon as the arrangements now in advanced progress are completed, it is probable that the Executive of the College will issue to the Trustees a detailed explanation of the intended arrangements. But even though we risk the disapprobation of the College authorities, we feel that we are discharging a still higher duty than any we owe to the Committee, in giving a brief account of the results of their labours. The

only scheme actually submitted to the consideration of the Committee was that of a re-distribution of all the Professorial duties (excepting that of Hebrew and the cognate dialects) between the Principal (Rev. J. J. Tayler) and Rev. James Martineau. Some of the Committee pleaded for further time and the propriety of entrusting the subject to a Select Committee, who might look at all the modes in which the difficulties of the institution might be solved. It was said in reply that for months the subject had been under consideration, that the arrangements to be made would bear no longer delay, and that the Committee ought themselves to discharge the duty entrusted to them by the Trustees, without the intervention of a Select Committee. A vote was taken, and by a large majority the scheme of re-distribution was carried. The two Professors were requested to prepare a scheme of re-distribution to be submitted to the Visitors and Committee for confirmation. The salaries of the two Professors were also by a vote of the Committee largely increased. At a second meeting of the Committee, held a few days ago, the acceptance by Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau of their offices,—the first as Principal and Professor of Biblical Theology and Ecclesiastical History, and the second as Professor of Mental, Moral and Religious Philosophy,—was announced. Mr. Tayler intimated his purpose not to accept the proposed increase of remuneration, and his wish that it should be applied to the provision of instruction in Hebrew. Of Mr. Tayler's disinterestedness and generosity in this matter there can be but one opinion entertained. The scheme of College instruction is not yet finally settled. We may express our satisfaction at the retention by the Principal of the courses of Ecclesiastical History. It would scarcely be possible for this part of the work to be better done. Year after year ample proofs have been given at the examinations of the instructive character of the lectures, and of the impression they have made on the minds of the students. Mr. Tayler will probably undertake a course of lectures on the Theology of the Old Testament, and the Interpretation and Criticism of the Books of the New Testament. That he will bring great learning to his new task, and the ability and

zeal which always characterize his public duties, every one, we presume, will readily admit. Whether the habits of his mind and the religious and philosophical opinions he has adopted, will allow him to approach the interpretation of Holy Writ with that entire freedom from prepossession which we know was the characteristic of Mr. Wellbeloved, and which we believe to have been not less displayed by both his successors,—this is a question on which different opinions will be formed. That he will intend and strive to do justice to the opinions of other men we feel perfectly assured. Some of the men in our church to whose opinion we have on many subjects been accustomed to defer, Rev. Dr. Hutton and Rev. J. H. Thom, have borne earnest and eloquent testimony to the impartiality and justness, as well as the ability and learning, of both Professors. That testimony has doubtless had great influence on the opinions of some friends of the College. We should be glad to share their confidence; but we do not. The future results of the College instruction, and the character of the ministers educated under the two distinguished men who will be henceforth the sole teachers of Theology to students of Manchester New College, may possibly remove our doubts and fears. The separation of Hebrew and the Critical Reading of the Old-Testament Scriptures from the work of the Professor of Theology, is a serious objection to the new arrangement. The course of instruction on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion will be henceforth divided between the two Professors; Mr. Tayler will take Revealed, and Mr. Martineau Natural Religion. From both gentlemen our opinions on these important subjects widely diverge. The ability which we feel assured they will always display, cannot reconcile us to the great change which will be made in this important department of Theological instruction. The different modes in use amongst English Unitarians of defending Christianity—some dwelling on the miraculous attestations of the gospel as well as its internal evidences of truth, others shewing the accordance of Christianity with the religious consciousness supposed to be innate to the soul—we regard without dissatisfaction. We have our own opinion of the comparative advantages of the two modes of defending Christianity, but, in the present state of opinion amongst Unitarians, we have been content that *both* should

be represented in the Professorial instruction in the College. It is the misfortune of the intended arrangement that henceforth only one class of opinions on the Evidences of Religion will be presented before the minds of the students, aided by the acceptance and strengthened by the personal convictions of the Professors. We have no desire to conceal our conviction that this is a bad arrangement, and one pregnant with evil consequences. We are sure it will give immediate dissatisfaction, and we are troubled by the thought of what the possible consequences may be on the religious instruction given in future years from the pulpits of the English Unitarian churches. When the scheme of re-distribution is finally settled and made public, we may probably feel called upon to make some other observations on it. We have reluctantly, but under a sense of duty, expressed our imperfect confidence in the new plan. We hope we have discharged the duty without being guilty of any disrespect to the gentlemen about to be entrusted with the Theological education of our future ministers. Their high characters, remarkable abilities, and fearless utterance of their own convictions of truth, entitle them to respect and honour. Thus far they shall ever receive it at our hands.

In consequence of the changes made in the Theological teaching of the College, Rev. R. Brook Aspland, who has been one of the Secretaries for eleven years, has resigned his office, and is succeeded by Rev. Charles Beard, of Gee Cross, near Manchester, to whom, or to R. D. Darbishire, Esq., Brown Street, Manchester, all official communications relating to the College should be addressed.

That we are not alone in our objection to the new College arrangements is shewn by the document that accompanies the present No., which has already received the signatures of many Trustees well known in the Unitarian body, and is daily receiving important additions.

#### THE NEW EDUCATION BILL.

In the din of party warfare now being waged in the House of Commons, little attention was given, on the evening of the 18th of February, to a motion made by Sir John Pakington on bringing in a Bill for the promotion of elementary education in cities and corporate towns. The Bill thus introduced took its rise



in the city of Manchester, where the subject of public education has occupied a greater amount of attention and effort than in most parts of the kingdom. At one time the friends of education in that city were divided into two hostile ranks, one seeking a combination of general and religious education, the other, a purely secular education. Each party brought its plans before Parliament in the shape of a Bill, but neither party was able to procure a Parliamentary sanction of its views. Since that time, concessions have been made by both parties; and no longer opposed, they now appear before Parliament unitedly asking for the passing of a permissive Act, applicable, not to Manchester alone, but to all the cities and corporate towns of the kingdom. The fusion of the two parties is a happy omen of the ultimate union of most of the friends of education. In Manchester, at a recent meeting in the Free-Trade Hall, Mr. Wm. Rayner Wood, Rev. W. Gaskell, Rev. J. Panton Ham and other eminent Unitarians, were seen on the same platform with Canon Richson and other clerical and "orthodox" friends of education. Sir John Pakington and Mr. Cobden are the selected Parliamentary advocates of the two parties. Of the Bill introduced by them the *Manchester Guardian* gives the following brief but clear explanation:

"The first thing to be noticed is, that the proposed legislation, like that already approved in the cognate case of Public Libraries, and like the Public Health Act, is permissive to localities. Any corporate town or city, on the voluntary motion of its ratepayers, and by the suffrages of the majority, may introduce the system; but it cannot be imposed upon them. The funds required for the purpose of the Act will be raised as an addition to the rate for the relief of the poor; and the administration will be confided in each locality to a school committee, elected by forms similar to those which are used in appointing boards of guardians. The authority thus constituted will have no control, or power of interference whatever, over any schools within the scope of its jurisdiction except those which may voluntarily seek its countenance and support. To such as think proper to place themselves in union with it, the committee will afford assistance in the shape of a weekly contribution towards the expense of educating every child in these establishments. An estimate having been made

of the varying cost of this process for boys, girls and infants, the local board will contribute the whole of this expense to 'free schools,' and one half of it to other schools, in regard to which it is stipulated that the remaining half shall be paid by the scholars themselves. In return for the benefits of this association, the schools that choose to avail themselves of it will be expected to comply with certain conditions clearly specified, and beyond which the local committee will have no pretension to interfere with their management, discipline or instruction. They must undergo inspection either by the inspectors of Her Majesty's Government or by competent local officers appointed for the purpose; they must, of course, maintain a staff of teachers proportioned in numbers and adequacy of attainment to the numbers of their pupils; and they must keep open to inspection a register of daily or weekly attendance. By far the most important, and to the managers of many schools the most irksome, obligation to which they will be required to submit, remains, however, to be mentioned. They must not refuse admittance to any child on the ground of its religion; they must not require it to attend, or abstain from attending, any Sunday-school or place of worship; and they must freely allow every child, on whose behalf the request is duly made, to be absent, or to be employed in secular study, during the hours, to be clearly specified beforehand, in which the teaching of any 'distinctive religious formula' is going on."

That this scheme is faultless we do not assert. It is on the face of it open to the objection that it makes no provision for education in rural districts, where there is often the least prospect of schools being raised and maintained by individual beneficence or by sectarian zeal. To those who think that the voluntary exertions of Englishmen will presently provide the required educational organization, this will be open to the objection that in their estimation lies against every system of National Education. Some of the details of the Bill may be clumsy and impracticable; but as a whole we are disposed to give it a friendly welcome, and to express the hope that it may escape the perils which threaten it from High-Churchmen on the one hand, and from the enthusiastic advocates of the voluntary principle on the other. The reception given to it by the House of Commons was not particularly cordial. If it is to



be carried, it must be by the Government perceiving that the intelligence of the country is in its favour, and by individual Members of Parliament receiving from their constituents unmistakable intimations of their wishes for its success. With the prospect of a reappearance on the hustings at no distant day, the Members of the Representative House of Parliament will defer with more than their usual respect to the convictions of intelligent and influential constituents.

#### RECENT LECTURES.

We have received of late several newspaper reports of lectures delivered by Unitarian ministers in different parts of the country with considerable success. The columns of the *Northern Whig*, of Belfast, have contained during the present month copious reports of a short course of lectures delivered to large audiences in the Presbyterian church, Rosemary Street, in that town, in reply to Dr. Cumming, who had a little before given a series of lectures in the Music Hall to the "Church-of-Ireland Young Men's Society," on the Proposal for a Revision of the Scriptures. The Reverend orator, specially imported into Ireland for this task, displayed the usual qualities of his public oratory, and more than his usual pretentiousness to scholarship and actual ignorance and misrepresentation. Mr. Porter brought to his task of reply, not only the requisite learning, but a very large amount of controversial skill and fluent expression. He did not spare, but exposed in a vein of happy ridicule, the blunders and presumption of Dr. Cumming, who, while bringing to the platform a parade of Greek perfectly amazing to his lady hearers, occasionally exhibited an ignorance of the meaning of the learned words he uttered, sufficiently entertaining to the few scholars to be found in his audiences. Mr. Porter took occasion to give his hearers much valuable historical and critical information. The lectures well deserve to be reprinted; and as Dr. Cumming is fond of recruiting his metropolitan popularity by frequent visits to and harangues in the provinces, it would be well to have in print, for provincial circulation, a true scholar's estimate of his qualifications for biblical criticism.—From a York newspaper, and from a private correspondent in that city, we learn that considerable attention has been excited there by a course of lectures, delivered in St. Sa-

viour's chapel, by Rev. H. V. Palmer, during six consecutive Sunday evenings. The subjects of the lectures were—1. The Being and Attributes of God; 2. The Bible a Record of Divine Inspiration; 3. God manifest in Christ; 4. The Holy Spirit, its Natural and Miraculous Operations; 5. The Constitution of the Christian Church; 6. The Duty of the Christian Church.

#### REVISION OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

It is matter of satisfaction to perceive the interest taken in this subject by various individuals and religious bodies in different parts of the kingdom. It has been suggested to us by a learned correspondent, and the suggestion meets with our hearty approval, that Biblical scholars having corrections of the English translation to propose, should transmit them to some central body, in order that they may be collected and preserved for future use, whether the occasion for such use arise from individual zeal or from a public and authorized revision being made. We respectfully recommend the suggestion to the immediate attention of the Committee of the Unitarian Association and the Trustees of the Improved Version. If they were to announce their willingness to receive such communications, whether in MS. or in print, and were to collect all the suggestions put forth in pamphlets, magazines and newspapers, and arrange them in a series of interleaved volumes containing the English Bible divided into convenient portions, the probable result would be a very valuable Biblical collection. When the volumes were well stored with suggestions, they might be advantageously deposited in Dr. Williams's Library for future use.

What is proposed must be the work of some years, and would probably be best executed by some one member of the Committee, willing to devote time and labour to the subject, and qualified by biblical knowledge to form a correct opinion of the value of the suggestions offered. If this suggestion should be thought worthy of being carried into effect, we shall be happy from time to time to aid the plan by assisting in giving publicity to it, and in sending such emendations as may be contributed by our more learned correspondents. In the mean time we invite the opinions of correspondents who have recently applied their thoughts to this important subject.